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# LEAVES FROM THE LIFE OF A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

BY

JOHN AUGUSTUS O'SHEA.

TWO VOLS., WITH A PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR, 21s.

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 Of GAMBETTA and of CALCRAFT, of cookery and quackery ;  
 Of SINNETT and ballooney, of SALA and of THACKERAY !  
 With 'special' journeys to and fro, direct, delayed, and round-  
 about ;

For here and there and everywhere this Special loves to bound  
 about !

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# AN IRON-BOUND CITY:

OR,

Five Months of Peril and Privation.

BY

JOHN AUGUSTUS O'SHEA,

AUTHOR OF

"LEAVES FROM THE LIFE OF A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT," ETC.

'A great and terrible World-Event, supremely beneficent and yet supremely terrible, upon which all Europe is waiting with abated breath . . . will be memorable to all the world for another thousand years.'

THOMAS CARLYLE *on the Siege of Paris.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1886.

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To the Memory

OF A

BRAVE SOLDIER AND STAUNCH FRIEND,

BRIGHT OF INTELLECT AND BIG OF HEART AS OF FRAME,

FREDERICK GUSTAVUS BURNABY,

*Colonel of the Royal Horse Guards,*

This Book is Dedicated

BY ONE WHO KNEW AND PRIZED HIM, AND WILL EVER MOURN  
HIS UNTIMELY END.



## PREFACE.

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### BEFORE THE BOOK WAS WRITTEN.

THE Preface here differs from that I set before the opening volume of the series of *Leaves from my Life*, inasmuch as I sit down to write a portion of it without having begun the work. The last was the result of a casual afterthought : this is the inspiration of malice prepense.

I know not what the coming book may turn out to be—so much depends on accident beyond personal control ; nor whether its introduction should take the form of apology or self-applause. That will be for the critics to determine. If I lower in merit, the blame is theirs. They have spoiled me. Possibly some have hinted faults without going the length of expressing absolute dislike, have given me sly punctures without venturing on a cruel stab. But I mind aspersions no more than a

duck does the rain-drops which glide off its unruffled back. Indeed, I am of those who consider Beaumarchais, pitting the *gens de lettres* against the *gens de feuille* (what an invidious distinction!), and scolding the journalist of Bouillon, a fool for his pains. He should have followed my plan, which is simple and original. I collect all the criticisms, go to the end of the garden, read and re-read those which are favourable, and lie back on a grassy seat, where I puff tobacco cloudlets, and preen myself in a delicious paroxysm of conceit. While under the opiate of literary coxcombry, I would not exchange places with the Sultan of Turkey—no, not even if Canning's knife-grinder, who also ground scissors, were thrown in.

As to the unfavourable criticisms, I make spills of them.

In the chronicles and reflections about to be penned, names may occur which were alluded to previously. Should the reader wish to make fuller acquaintance with the persons thus mentioned, I dare say the publishers or the nearest librarian can satisfy him. But I mean to make every instalment of this series distinct and complete in itself, so that each can be read without the need of reading another, while all will keep up a certain thread of



continuity. "How many more are there to be?" a Scotch friend asks. I really cannot say, but I have a vague hope I may bring myself level with the age some day. I am now, and have been for some months, laid up in dry dock, undergoing repairs; but by the time I have finished record of what has been gone through, I trust I may be able to enter on active duty anew, fairly vigorous, wiser and steadier than ever, and as artful as an enlarged experience of this artful world can make me. My Scotch friend may put me to the question then. There is no knowing what I may do. When fresh food for memory shall have been gathered, I may be tempted to enter on a fresh course of reminiscences.

## AFTER THE BOOK WAS WRITTEN.

Well, the book is finished; and since it is, I am glad, and meeker than when I began. Like Horace, I may address it:

"Vertumnum Janumque, liber, spectare videris;  
Scilicet ut prostes Sosiorum pumice mundus."

Frankly, I am not satisfied with the performance; I feel that to me, as to a better writer, might be applied the words of Thomas Carlyle: "Maan,

when will ye write a boo-o-k?" But I have laboured at it conscientiously. I have endeavoured to set down a plain, straight chronicle of a great scene in the world's history, in which it was mine to fill a super's humble part upon the stage. The Sage of Chelsea could do no more.

In looking over my diary in beleaguered Paris, I have toned down much bitterness of expression, left out some extraneous matter, and tried to give as accurate a picture of what happened, without bias of flattery or fear, as an honest observer could, who holds war in abhorrence, but tyranny of all kinds in utter scorn. And now, with Horace again, I say to the production, "*fuge quo descendere gestis*," and better luck attend you than has waited upon me.

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# AN IRON-BOUND CITY.

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Paris Threatened—A Military Government of Civilians—  
Looking out for the Four Uhlans—Cold Historical  
Comfort—Former Sieges—Brialmont on the Defences  
—*Semper non Paratus*—A Scratch Army—The Sham  
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Field-Marshal in Custody—A Captain Catechizing his  
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Reconnaissance.

THE third French Republic was in its swaddling-  
clothes. The second Empire was dead—dead beyond  
recall—and its partisans had gone away or were  
hiding their heads. War with Germany was raging,  
and the Germans evidently meant to carry it on  
to the bitter end, no matter under what form of  
administration France chose to be misruled. The

army in the field had been beaten ; there was no army in the field now, but the remnant of an army was locked up in Metz, and the wreck of an army was locked up in Strasburg. In Paris, which had passed in a few days through the throes of an opium-eater's frenzy — incredulous astoundment, trembling fearsomeness, delirious joy, chained wrath—there was the simulacrum of an army : an army of shreds and patches, with no more solid groundwork than the fugitive corps which Vinoy had brought back from Mezières, the echoes of the thundering victorious German guns at Sedan in its ears—that and some thousands of sailors, volunteers, and superannuated fogeys, a levy of raw country-boys, and a sham citizen-soldiery.

The Government, like the army, was one of shreds and patches—a Government of chance, precipitately and irregularly adopted in the height of a crisis, a Government of hazard endorsed by hysteria. There were a dozen members in it, the majority lawyers or journalists. In this Government of National Defence there was not a single military man until Trochu, the Breton non-Bona-

partist Governor of Paris, appointed against the grain by the Bonaparte, consented to join it on condition of being accepted as President.\*

The useless mouths had been ordered away. Most of the foreigners, the pleasure-seekers, the selfish, the luxurious, the timid, the narrow of means had left; but their places were supplied by refugees from the outskirting villages, who had come to seek food and shelter, and to aid in the defence. Some had departed who could and should have remained; many were admitted who were an encumbrance.

There was no longer room for doubt. The stately, beautiful Paris was to undergo the trials

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\* The Government consisted of Trochu, President; Jules Favre, Vice-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs; Crémieux, Minister of Justice; Gambetta, Minister of the Interior; Ernest Picard, Minister of Finance; Jules Simon, Minister of Public Instruction; Emmanuel Arago, Garnier-Pagès, Glais-Bizoin, Eugène Pelletan, and Henri Rochefort, with Jules Ferry as Secretary. To these were afterwards added Dorian, Minister of Public Works; Magnin, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce; General Le Flô, Minister of War; Admiral Fourichon, Minister of Marine; and Etienne Arago, Mayor of Paris.

of a siege : to be cut off from communication with the outer world, to be delivered over to its own resources for subsistence and resistance. It was hard to realize that in the year 1870 of the Christian era, in a century of steam and electricity and bepraised international bazaars, such things could be. I, whose office it was to stop in the city during that imminent beleaguering and chronicle its incidents, sometimes rubbed my eyes and asked myself, was not this an uneasy dream? Could it be possible that a host of German soldiers camped on French soil, drank French wine under French roofs, and were marching by easy stages, at their own good will and pleasure, to the attack of the French capital?

It was no vision of the night ; it was true—as true as the mirage-disappearance of the Empire which looked so firmly based, so strong, and so splendid. The *Official Journal* of the infant Republic was before me, and contained a proclamation from the Republican Prefect of Police, de Kératry, a Breton Count, beginning with these humiliating words :  
' The enemy being on the point of arriving under

the walls of Paris!" Notice was given in this document that the gates would be open only from six a.m. to eight p.m. from that day forward, Thursday, the 15th of September, until further orders.

Practically, that was the inauguration of the siege; although, in the strict military sense, the invader did not sit down before us until later. But he was at hand, and the lance-pennons of those famous four Uhlans might flutter at any moment on the sky-line. There was a message that an advance-guard of his force had entered Nanteuil, which was but thirty miles away to the north-east; and yet another, which was not credited, that ten thousand Prussians were expected to arrive at Joinville, a hamlet on the Marne, at the farther edge of the Vincennes racecourse, at ten minutes to eleven in the forenoon of that memorable 15th of September. This startling piece of circumstantial news had some foundation. The bridge over the Marne had been blown up as a measure of precaution by the French engineers, some Prussians having shown themselves in the neighbourhood.

For the reader familiar with London to grasp the condition of affairs, he must picture to himself an army-corps of, say Dutch, in possession of Chelmsford, while a body of their lancers and sharpshooters threatened Sydenham Hill. The foe was as close to us as that.

There were other undeniable proofs of his proximity. The train which left the Northern Terminus on this morning fell into his hands at Senlis; another was fired upon at Chantilly, and the railway company resolved to undertake no more traffic to the latter station, which is on the mail route to England. The clerks in the various Government offices had fled to Tours, the provisional capital, three days previously, and an order was posted that the price of meat should be regulated by tariff, to be fixed by the authorities every eight days. These were significant portents. It was no uneasy dream, but a grim actuality. Paris was indeed to undergo a siege.

The students of the bygone told us there would be nothing new in that. Paris had been besieged fifteen times already.

What if it were to be given up to sack, as by the laws of war it could be, if the city proper fired on the besiegers ?

They were pat with their answer. There was nothing singular in that either. It might come to pass. "Corinth was pillaged by Mummius, and Rome by Genseric."

But, surely, one could not conceive such a profanation as a remorseless shell defacing that exquisite front of Notre Dame, a poem of lacework petrified ?

"Wherefore not ?" answered these matter-of-fact explorers of ancient annals. "The temple of Thebes was destroyed by Alexander !"

Or if one of these hell-bombs of which we had been reading—bombs charged with petroleum—were to fall on the noble Bibliothèque in the Rue Richelieu ?

Again they were ready with reply. "It was but the fortune of war. The library of Alexandria was burned by Omar."

There was more comfort in looking over the tale of former sieges. The Normans were two years

before the place in 885; the Dauphin had no better luck in 1358. In the following year Edward of England carried fire and sword to the foot of the walls; but there he stopped, and fell back to Chartres. In 1422 Henry V., of the House of Lancaster, entrenched within Paris, repulsed an attack of Charles VII.; and in the years that followed, down to 1636, the city owed its safety no less than six times to its defences.

It is an axiom of war that a besieged stronghold must surrender if the besieger has adequate resources at his command, unless a relieving army smashes up the attack. Time is on the side of the besieger. He has the cheerful audacity which is born of aggression; he must have a certain encouragement of previous success behind him; he has no idle maws to fill, or women and children to look after; nor is he so liable to sickness, or the despondency which comes by brooding over misfortune.

I do not think those who fortified Paris believed that it would ever have to sustain a siege. Its enceinte and outlying forts were meant less to repel



the invader than to cow the revolutionist. Brialmont, of the Belgian Engineers (no mean authority), had absolutely written in a technical work, "*Les forts de Paris la mettent à l'abri d'un blocus régulier.*" And yet it was to such an enterprise the Germans were committed; the capital was their objective point, and those who knew anything of military science felt that the capital must succumb, notwithstanding its enormous circuit, unless some unlooked-for ally or some miraculous army should start up to the aid of France, or unless some untoward series of blunders should be made by the enemy—contingencies not within the domain of the likely. It was a Titanic undertaking—the greatest siege the world had ever witnessed; but the Germans remembered that while artillery had been progressing the Paris fortifications were at a standstill, and the Germans had shown themselves equal to stupendous effort. They had this in their favour, too, and they knew it (for they were well served by their Intelligence Department), that Paris was in a wretched state of unpreparedness. At the period when the disasters to the Army of the Rhine

(so called) had become known, the enceinte had no armament—not even powder-magazines or traverses ; the military zone was obstructed with houses, and sixty-nine passages of ingress and egress cut the belt of ramparts in every direction. The forts had neither *abris*, platforms, magazines, casemates, embrasures, nor any of the customary accessory defences. There were only three guns on each bastion of the forts when war was declared, whereas the armament should have been seven ; on the ramparts there was not a single piece ; and the two parks of artillery (about five hundred guns) comprising the reserve of Paris had been sent to Metz and Strasburg. There were but 540,000 kilogrammes\* of powder in store, and in several of the forts the garrison of artillery was represented by a solitary gunner !

This betokened either an implicit faith in French

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\* A kilogramme is 2·205 lbs. avoirdupois, or practically two and one-fifth lbs. Where military terms occur, the reader is referred to any simple military handbook. Were footnotes to be added explanatory of all, too much attention would be drawn from the text. That is the writer's apology for recommending the study of a too fascinating subject.

invincibility, or a culpable negligence — perhaps both. When it was acknowledged that a siege was not only possible but probable, nay, inevitable, superhuman exertions had to be, and were, made to remedy defects; and a garrison, summoned from all points of the compass, was improvised—a composite, most uneven garrison at the best.

Of infantry of the Line there were but two complete regiments—the 35th and 42nd, which had been withdrawn from Rome—and fifty-one *batuillons de marche*, made up from depôts of the Line, of the Guard, and of the Foot-chasseurs. There were three battalions of the regiment of Gendarmerie, two of the Republican Guard (better known as the Garde de Paris), and two of the Firemen. There were six battalions of Marine Infantry and of seamen trained to small arms distributed in the forts, six of Custom-house officers (*douaniers*), and two of Forest-guards. There were at the least twenty battalions, of an average strength of a thousand bayonets, of Freeshooters, inclusive of the *Sergents de ville* (mostly retired soldiers), which raised the disposable force of foot

to ninety-eight battalions. To have estimated that there were fifty thousand solid and efficient disciplined infantry in this aggregation would have been going beyond the mark. Twelve or fifteen thousand of the number were as good fighting material as could be collected anywhere.

The proportion of cavalry to support any attempt at operations outside the range of the forts was fair, to wit, *régiments de marche*, formed of Dragoons, Cuirassiers and Chasseurs, a regiment of Chasseurs returned from Rome, six squadrons of Gendarmes, three of the Mounted Municipals, one of Spahis, and a couple of Volunteer Scouts, in all some forty strong squadrons.

The artillery was in a transition state. It would be misleading to enter into any calculation of its strength; but that there were gunners available even for field service was palpable. They were to be noticed bivouacked in the open spaces, parks, and gardens of the fashionable quarter of the town, very dirty, with badly groomed horses, principally of the complement of the artillery which had fallen back with Vinoy's force in the well-advised retrograde march from Mezières.

It will readily be admitted that this heterogeneous force was no match for the confident, disciplined, and homogeneous legions of Germany. Still it was the nucleus of defence, and contained the only semblance of a regular army to the hand of the Governor of Paris. Behind it there were the National Guards and the suddenly convoked Mobiles. Of the former, the less said the better. The majority were pasteboard soldiers. Sixty battalions nominally existed under the Empire; but they were ignorant of the common rudiments of drill, and were too well off and too fond of their own comforts to affront much hardship. It was a case of *ludere qui nescit, campes tribus abstinet armis*. Sixty new battalions were added under the Republic; most in those were stout artisans; many were old soldiers or veterans of the revolutionary barricades. Trochu, to whom the conduct of the defence of Paris was entrusted, professed a great admiration for these National Guards; but he could not have felt it. He issued an Order of the Day, in which he cheered them with the promise that the enceinte, defended by three hundred thousand

bayonets, was unapproachable. Bayonets! Of an armed mob chiefly, he forgot to add. It is the duty of a commander sometimes to lie. In that respect Trochu did his duty. But his principal dependence was on the sailors in the forts and the Mobile Guards from outside. These rustics, somewhat like English militiamen, but of a better class socially, had come with alacrity from the intact provinces—from Normandy, Picardy, Brittany, Burgundy, and some even from the south. They were robust, tractable, healthy bachelors between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, were armed with breech-loading rifles inferior to the chassepot, were officered by gentlemen of local position and members of what we would call the old county families, and were animated with a sentiment of quiet, honest patriotism. I should say there were about ninety thousand of them. The Mobiles of Paris, some five-and-twenty thousand, were a restless, God-defying, insubordinate pack of rascallions—witty, vicious, and wiry. Under the lash of an iron discipline, they might have made an impetuous light infantry.

On the morning of the 16th, hostile cavalry were descried in the direction of Créteil, a village in the south-eastern environs in the elbow of the Seine and the Marne, within range of the fort of Charenton. The squadron of Volunteer Scouts formed at the Elysée was instructed to "feel" them. It did literally. At five in the evening, the squadron was to be seen returning from its reconnaissance, making its entry rather pompously by the boulevards. The corps was capitally mounted, most of its cattle coming from the ex-Imperial stud, and prettily uniformed in a sort of rifle-dress, with a hussar pelisse. Its vanguard had touch of the Prussians about six miles off, below the veterinary college of Alfort; there was a scurry forward, and some lively sword-play. The Scouts claimed the honours, but they did not have it all their own way. They lost three horses, and three of their number carried the marks of sabre-slashes—to wit, MM. de Kerghariou, de Marval, and de Béde.

Thus the first blood shed for the Republic under Paris was noble.

M. de Kerghariou, a Count and a Breton, had served in the Pontifical Zouaves at Mentana. His colour, if any, was the white of the Bourbon, not the red of Democracy. The Scouts assured me it was the "blue hussars of the Royal Guard" they had routed. The truth was, the enemy was dispersed by the foot-artillery which was in support. One gunner got a bullet in the head from some Prussian infantry who had craftily ensconced themselves behind the Lyons railway cutting near the scene of the skirmish. This brush would be hardly worth mentioning, but for the proof it gave of the surprising temerity of the Prussians—certes, their cavalry was of the boldest—and of the continued carelessness of the French, who allowed a position to be occupied under the very muzzles of their ordnance. That tactic of the infantry taking advantage of the railway had its lesson, too. These soldiers might lack the *furia Francese*; but they were sensible and kept their heads. Clear heads in warfare often stave off the necessity of making use of nimble legs. Marshal Saxe was wont to say an army won its battles by its legs, not its arms; but



he meant by that its capacity for making forced marches, not for running away.

While an irregular cavalry corps was enjoying its baptism of fire in one quarter, an officer of the regular branch, Captain Buisson, of the 9th Lancers, was signalizing himself on the east front, where a patrol of the enemy's Uhlans—the veritable Uhlans—were caught hovering perilously near to the forts. Buisson sallied forth cautiously, and made a dash at them; they turned bridle, but one of their horses lagged, and the French officer caught it up after a long and a dangerous pursuit, captured the Prussian, and led him back, horse, arms, and equipments, amid the cheers of his men. This was the solitary Uhlan made prisoner under Paris.

Inspired by the exploits of the mounted arm, the freshly fledged warriors of the National Guard panted for glory. They were aflame with the ardent zeal of the neophyte, and eager to distinguish themselves, and the easiest way to do that was to lay hold of some enemy to the commonwealth.

Marshal Vaillant, whose long life had been passed

in the service of his country, was among the first arrested, and led a prisoner to the quarters of the Governor in the Louvre. The poor old man was strolling on the ramparts; he had a pass, but forgetting that now was the glorious Republic, described himself as "Minister of the House of the Emperor." Clearly, he was a Prussian. "Away with him! away with him!" and the mob swelling as it rolled along, like a snowball, howled round the cab like wolves in a snow-waste. A lapse of memory should not have been felonious at his age; but then an Imperialist who had been wounded under the first Empire should have had more good taste than to survive the fall of the second.

The veteran Marshal was set free by the Governor, and wisely left for the country; but this scandalous essay only whetted the appetite of his captors. Well can I recollect having been aroused from a comfortable doze by the newsboys in the streets crying out at the top of their voices, "*Arrestation du Maréchal Canrobert!*"

How Canrobert? He back! I left him last in Metz! What had *he* done? The arrest of Vaillant

could have been understood. He was a fanatical Bonapartiste, a fat pluralist, and one of what Hugo called the *vultuville*. But Canrobert? On getting a paper the rebus was solved. It was General Baron Ambert, who had incurred the wrath of the plebs. He commanded a section of the defence, and had gone on a tour of inspection of his division of National Guards. It appears he had exasperated the new battalions by complimenting those that had existed under the Empire, and allowing "the pure of the pure" to pass by unhonoured. Somebody told him they were growing jealous, and then he mended his hand so far as to damn them with faint praise. One of their captains came forward and called on him to cry, "*Vive la République!*" The General properly refused to obey this peremptory summons from a subordinate.

"I'll cry '*Vive la France!*'" said he, "with all my heart; but I refuse to raise acclamations to a government which has yet to be ratified by the country at large."

He was hauled off a prisoner to the quarters of Trochu on the spot. Of a verity, he had been guilty

of an imprudence, but he did what was manly. It will be well to state here what was the sequel of this unseemly episode. Baron Ambert was deprived of his command! The *Official Journal* did not enlighten us as to whether the National Guardsmen, who had arrested their own general officer while he was in the discharge of his duty, had been eulogized in an Order of the Day, and recommended for decorations. That was an oversight. General de Montfort, a friend of the dismissed Ambert, resigned his command in disgust. Trochu could not have approved these indignities and insults to men in authority; but he was weak. What will you? He was a nervous rider trying to master a powerful brute, ill-trained, and of capricious temper.

Each of these earlier days brought its fresh excitement. On the 17th appeared a fervid appeal from Victor Hugo to his countrymen. He was back from self-imposed exile, and must put himself in evidence. He had called upon the Germans to accept peace; but as the Germans were somehow too busy with other matters to hearken to the magnanimous offer of the poet, his soul revolted, and

his indignant voice rang out in favour of war. He repeated a litany of all the great towns of France, and with the pleonastic expansion of his latter style, bade them gird up their loins for the combat. In this strain he wrote :

“Lyons, take up thy gun ; Bordeaux, lift thy carbine ; Rouen, draw thy sword ; Marseilles, chaunt thy hymn and come terrible ! Be the invader pelted with the bones of our mother !”

This was the inspired way of counselling Frenchmen to stone the Germans, if they could not get carving-knives to stick into them, or even thick sticks wherewith to drub them. There is but one Cambyzes. Alas ! that the *sacer vates* high-pinnacled should sometimes have condescended to play to him the part of Vizier. The Teutons have the name of being sentimental, but they do not usually let poetry disturb their appetites or distract them from their occupation. Poor old Hugo, if thou wert to head a deputation of the mightiest bards from Homer down, their most impassioned appeals would not take a wrinkle out of the forehead of von Moltke ! Nay, if the sisters Nine were to call on

Bismarck, I do believe that practical gentleman would sacrilegiously chuck the awful Melpomene under the chin, and ask Terpsichore to put him through a few steps of the Bavarian polka.

More to the purpose on the 17th was an official bulletin, dated Ablon, 4.30 p.m. of the previous day, stating that the railway had been interrupted by the destruction of one of the bridges between that point and Athis, and that the enemy had forded the Seine near Juvisy. Ablon, Athis, and Juvisy were three contiguous stations on the Orleans Railway, distant respectively fifteen, seventeen, and twenty kilomètres.\* Juvisy, the farthest, was about twenty-two minutes off by express train. "Fighting is going on at Athos," ran the latest despatch.

On this forenoon took place the first active operation of regular troops, if such they could be called, where a cumbering structure of recruits and volunteers, who had never smelt powder, was built upon merest scaffolding of trained men. The

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\* Kilomètres may be reduced to miles, English, by multiplying by five and dividing by eight.

privates did not know each other or their officers, most of the regiments being formed of contingents from four distinct regiments. Assuredly Trochu had a task before him to dishearten Hercules, and he had no one with a great name to help him. There was not a general in the place whose reputation had any weight with the army; Cambriels and Billard, who had escaped from Sedan, were not conspicuous; Ducrot, who had also escaped from the capitulation—broken his parole, the Germans said—was the most distinguished.

At eleven o'clock d'Exéa's division of Vinoy's corps (the 13th, which had been quartered under the walls of the Château of Vincennes) left for a reconnaissance in a southerly direction. The force consisted of a battalion of foot-chasseurs, which took the advance as usual; of four regiments of infantry, and of an artillery comprising six mitrailleuses, and a small body of the choicest cavalry in the service—the Chasseurs d'Afrique. The column crossed the Marne at Charenton, and entering on the high road to Provins, which runs to the left of the fort, marched to Créteil, where it turned to the right

and continued for a couple of miles till it reached, at about half-past two, the foot of a gentle eminence crowned with brushwood. The 20th of the Line was here thrown out in skirmishing order, and had begun its advance, when suddenly the heads of four small columns of the enemy were detected, and almost at the same moment a line of smoke-puffs burst from the trees. The leaden salute hurtled harmlessly over the French. The zip of the musketry had hardly ceased, when the sharp slam of field artillery came ringing from cover of the brushwood. These guns were well served, and obliged the French skirmishers to fall back; but the mitrailleuses were ordered up, and soon was heard the ominous rattle, not unlike the emptying of a cart of stones. One of their discharges seemed to have taken effect on a group of Prussian staff-officers. The fusillade was kept up for half an hour, when the points of myriad bayonets were caught glistening in the sun in the enemy's rear, and General Vinoy prudently ordered the retreat to be sounded. The fact was established that the Germans had got up the valley of



the Marne in strength, and as they were reported at the wood of Clamart in the south, the impression was unavoidable that they were passing across to Sceaux and Versailles, in order to surround the tier of forts on that side, and join hands with the army supposed to be coming down upon us from the north. Verily, the plot was thickening.

## CHAPTER II.

Paris in the Vice—The Disaster of Châtillon—A French Officer's Account—The Intrepid, Invincible Zouaves—Devil Take the Hindmost—Coolness of the Bretons—Ducrot Conspicuous—Traits of Valour—Bewilderment of the Chiefs—A Plucky Schoolmaster—Much Ado About Nothing—The Investment Completed—The Resources of Resistance.

ON the 18th it was undeniable that the circle of invasion was closing in like a garotte and throttling Paris. In the forenoon, all railway communication with the provinces had ceased. The line to Brittany by Versailles, whose terminus is on the Boulevard Mont Parnasse, was the last to remain open; but a message arrived by noon that the light horsemen of King William were in the ancient royal seat. Specks of the strange uniforms dotted the horizon on almost every side. Those were the "lost sentinels" of the enemy. The moving patches of black on the plains were his

ubiquitous cavalry; and the woods around must have hidden masses of his infantry. The unkind woods would not burn down because the young trees were too full of sap; but why were they not cut down? From Vincennes in the east, we learned that there had been an exchange of shots for half an hour across the banks of the Marne, near Joinville; from Vanves in the south, we heard that strong columns had thrown a bridge over the Seine at Villeneuve St. Georges, and were steadily tramping towards Versailles at the back of the thicket of Verrières; from St. Denis in the north, platoon-fire was reported to be active at the Grande Garde of the fort of the East; from the Mayor of Poissy came tidings that boded ill on the west. Conflans, Andrézy, Carrières, and Triel were occupied, and there were German cannon on the heights of Chanteloup; but the Seine wound like a huge serpent between Paris and their mouths, and the warden fortress of Mont Valérien raised its rugged outlines in challenge.

On the 19th there was the first contact with the enemy in force. It could not be dignified with the

name of a pitched battle, nor yet an engagement. I suppose it had better be dismissed as an encounter. But it was an encounter of a serious nature, and resulted in a bitter reverse for French arms, revealing the utter weakness of most of the regulars. The French attempted to surprise the Germans, and the Germans not only held their own in the face of superior numbers, but repulsed their assailants, and drove them off the field in rout. It was my firm conviction that if the enemy had sufficient enterprise, and was in available strength sufficient—one division could have done it—he might have pressed in by the gates at the heels of the runaways, and established himself in a portion of the enceinte on that day, and have held it until the arrival of reinforcements that would have defied dislodgment. Nor was I alone in this opinion. The ramparts were reinforced by reserves well supplied with ammunition, it is true ; but the reserves were of quality as wretched as the fugitives. Between the enceinte and the forts there was a dense barrier of houses as yet undemolished, and the artillery of the forts, even if

those houses had not intervened, had no more than ten rounds to each gun. This is historic fact. There was a magnificent chance of taking Paris by a *coup de main*. Napoleon the Great might have tried it; but there was no Napoleon among the Germans, and they let the opportunity which the sport of fate had cast in their way slip idly by.

I was not present at the combat, and am slow to write aught that would seem unkindly to those within whose lines I was sheltered as benevolent neutral. The task of criticism is ungracious when one has not shared the danger, so I prefer to give the brief unvarnished account of a French officer who was present :

“Two corps d’armée, as you are aware, remained with us after the capitulation of Sedan; the 13th, commanded by Vinoy, and the 14th by Renault. To the former was assigned the defence of the north, to the latter of the south of Paris. On the 13th, 14th, and 15th September the divisions of the 14th corps took up their positions from Meudon to Villejuif, General Renault establishing his headquarters at Montrouge, on the road to Orleans. On the evening of the 17th

the headquarters moved more to the right front at Châtillon, and the troops were massed in this direction; a division (Maud'huy's) being at the same time detached from Vinoy's corps to occupy the extreme left on the heights of Villejuif. The Prussians were on the plateau of Châtillon, from which Ducrot, the supreme commander, took the resolution to drive them. Orders were given for the attack on the morning of the 19th. The centre was formed of the three infantry divisions of Rénault's corps; that of Maussion to the left on the height of Bagneux, opposite the wood of Verrières; that of d'Hugues, with the sixth battalion of the Mobiles of the Seine, to its right; full in the centre on the Châtillon road a small brigade of cavalry (the dépôts of the Guard and a regiment of gendarmerie), masking the artillery; and to the right of that again, Caussade's division, whose extreme right consisted of a regiment of Zouaves stationed in the wood of Clamart. The earthwork redoubt on the Châtillon plateau was armed with pieces of 12, and held by two battalions of infantry of the Line, and the battalion of the Mobiles from Ile-et-Vilaine,

the whole under command of Colonel Corbin, of the Engineers. The entire front was covered with skirmishers. The encounter had three distinct phases, which will help you to comprehend it at once. First, precipitate flight of the Zouaves on the right; second, almost complete inaction of the division lent by Vinoy on the left; and third, the continued stand of the centre, which kept head to the Prussians nearly all day. While the cartridges were being distributed to the Zouaves a shell burst in the midst of them, and the entire regiment took leg-bail. *Not one was wounded!* An important position was thus sacrificed to the enemy, who took it and outflanked Caussade's division, which disbanded and fled also. The cavalry held their ground, and at seven the artillery, under General Boissonet of that arm, opened a vigorous fire, sweeping the front right and left. Twice he silenced the enemy. The division of Hugues on the left kept up a steady file fire, until the Prussians, overlapping it, unmasked a couple of mitrailleuses, and the young soldiers began to show symptoms of fear. The aged Renault, who had been coolly sitting

on his horse at the head of the cavalry, spurred forward to rally them. General Ducrot saw it was useless, and ordered a retreat. Hugues's division, supported by Maussion's, fell back, leaving a battalion of the 58th in a cemetery with loopholed walls to protect their rear. The cavalry and artillery retired in perfect order, *en échiquier*. Ducrot threw himself into the redoubt, and stubbornly held it until the safety of the body of the artillery was assured, the fire being so well sustained that the enemy was driven to the shelter of the woods. When nothing more needed to be done, he spiked the eight guns in the earthwork and withdrew. At four o'clock the affair was over. We lost much less than the Prussians, thanks to our brave and efficient artillery."

Yes, the French had fewer casualties than the Germans, and that it is which rendered the disaster more sobering. They had to abandon a ridge of hills to the south to the enemy, who possessed himself of eight of their guns, and resumed his march to Versailles unmolested, occupying a range of heights and a strong row of hamlets outside the forts. In



conversation with a French journalist, I learned that an inconsiderate volley, fired by a battalion of Mobiles in the rear, caused some scratch battalions of the Line to imagine that their retreat to the forts had been turned, and disorder sprang up in their ranks. Ducrot, a man of energy, behaved well; but he could not screw the courage of his immature command to the sticking-place. The Bretons held their own with obstinacy, but there was no standing against the German artillery; and when the French evacuated the redoubt, leaving their guns behind them, *because they had no horses to carry them off*, the Prussian infantry rushed out of a wood, swarmed up to the defensive earthwork, and soon found means to do what they required with the forsaken cannon.

On the right, the Prussians had taken up a shrewd position in the grove of Clamart, and sent out spirts of vapour, like the escaping steam from a teakettle, through the leaves of thick underwood. That was the needle-gun. Ever and anon, quicker each moment, with a hiss and a boom, burst forth a gust of white smoke, like the whiff from the

funnel of a locomotive. That was the howitzer. There was a tremor of agitation among the intrepid, invincible Zouaves—a French equivalent for the cry of “Devil take the hindmost”—and a stampede which ended only at the city walls.

There were exceptions: the artillery, the gendarmes, and the seasoned Zouaves fell back in order. The sailor-gunners in the forts of Vanves and Issy, by pounding long shots, succeeded in keeping the enemy at a respectful distance. Some of the fugitives had the audacity to show themselves in the wine-shops on the Left Bank, where the credulous treated them to cannikins of sour claret as reward for their stories of how the field had been lost by “the traitorism of officers,” who—so the craven scoundrels averred—had sold them to the enemy! It is but just to record that the flying Zouaves were not the men of the Crimea and Palestro, Africa and Mexico, but a parcel of strip-lings who had joined the corps for the sake of the picturesque uniform. But the uniform does not make the soldier, any more than the cowl does the monk. Châtillon was an evil omen for

the defence. It must have confirmed Trochu in the opinion every officer of judgment held, that the demoralized garrison of Paris would require much improvement before any hardy action on the offensive could be risked. The situation was desperate, but there was no excuse for despair. It is in the genius of discipline to make the panic-stricken of yesterday conduct themselves with courage to-morrow.

There were some redeeming traits of valour in this unhappy combat. Richard de Nugent, a member of the Hiberno-Austrian family, and a relative of the grim old Marshal who was to be seen at Solferino riding on a cream-coloured cob wherever danger was thickest, behaved with notable intrepidity. Young de Nugent had been an officer in the Austrian service, but threw up his commission when the war broke out to join the French, and have another thrust with his good sword at the victors of Sadowa. Fortune does not always smile upon the bold. He had engaged as a trooper in the Mounted Chasseurs. He was slain. Sous-Intendant Parmentier adventured into the press

of the *mêlée* to carry back the wounded. Gunner Jean Ouhlon gave an example which the artillery should cherish. He stuck to his piece, with a lieutenant of his battery, after the horses had been killed and his comrade servants had been put *hors de combat*, and succeeded in keeping up a fire on the enemy until a new team arrived, and the imperilled cannon was limbered up, and trotted off to safety.

A couple of hundred brave men stopped until night had fallen in a work at Meudon, expecting an attack of the enemy ; but the enemy made no sign. They did not like to quit the post which had been confided to them without orders, and telegraphed to Paris to know what they were to do. At Paris, the chiefs were so confused that the notion got into their heads that the redoubt might be in the possession of the Prussians, and a vague answer was returned. Communication of a disconcerting nature was carried on for some time, until the wise men inside the ramparts, half-overcome by the persistence of the little garrison, sent this bewildering message : " If you are not Prussians, come back."

It will hardly be credited—it does sound incredible—that the French, in that humiliating cut and run at Châtillon, or rather run without delaying to cut, cleared out of the unfinished redoubt of Hautes-Bruyères, which the enemy had not dared to menace.

This was a position of the first importance, commanding and easy of defence. Not a man was left in it. Some of the enemy's cavalry, noticing that it was strangely quiet, loitered round in observation on the plain, but were sent flying by a few shots from a rifle picked up by a brave schoolmaster of the neighbourhood, who mounted to the belfry of the village of Villejuif, and constituted himself its sole warden. This dominie had more presence of mind than half the Generals in the war, and deserved to have his breast covered with a dozen decorations. He entered Paris, and reported what he saw. Maud'huy's division was ordered to reoccupy the place, but discovered that some enterprising Prussians had been before them. However, these were not in sufficient numbers, and had to retire in consequence of the attentions of the forts. But Maud'huy's

troops, who made believe to pursue them, had to be content with again garrisoning the line of Villejuif, the Moulin-Saquet, and Hautes-Bruyères with a loss of two killed and a score wounded. A trifling loss ; but when these repeated themselves, as they did every day, the tally soon rose to a painful height. The Ministry of the Interior—though why that Ministry one is puzzled to know—issued a war-bulletin on the 22nd, which made those accustomed to read between the lines laugh sarcastically. It told how Admiral Saisset had sent a party from the fort of Noisy to burn a house on the borders of the park of Rancy, which the enemy had used as an observatory. This party (strength not given) had dislodged fifty Uhlans from a garden behind, and had no loss save one man slightly touched on the arm. At the same hour (hour not given) the Commandant-in-Chief of the Seine flotilla—for we even had a waspish swarm of gunboats—had pitched a shell on another house used as an observatory at Bas Meudon ; while the sentinels at the bridge of Sèvres exchanged shots with those of the Prussians at Brimborion. We heard nothing of

the effects of that shell or those shots, wherefrom it was safe to conclude they had none worth mentioning. But why go to the trouble of chronicleing small beer? It was not a hopeful sign to make this ado about nothing.

The investment was now virtually completed; but Paris had within her vast resources to fall back upon, in arms and stores and a large adult male population. The world had no greater fortress. The enceinte consisted of ninety-four bastions, with masonry escarps and a wide deep ditch. This enceinte was more than seven miles long in parts and five miles broad. Outside there were sixteen strong detached forts, forming a cordon of thirty-two miles, which meant that the invaders should occupy a circumference of some forty-four miles so as to keep out of the immediate reach of the guns. Within the enceinte the communications were all that could be desired, the garrison having every advantage of acting on interior lines. There was a splendid military road all round, a railroad circuit inside that, telegraphic wires right and left, and broad intersecting avenues;

so that it ought to have been easy to concentrate masses on any point, and send them forth at day-break suddenly between the admirable sortie-gate of two forts in overwhelming odds. The case of Paris was by no means hopeless, had the proper man been in sole authority, and had he the proper material to mould into shape.



### CHAPTER III.

The Coquetry of Woe—Bland Weather—Imprisonment Grows Monotonous—An Aged Philosopher—A Hero of Sedan—Some Aspects of Paris—Mars *vice* Mammon—Those who Prayed—On the Boulevards—The New Police—Blanche Pierson—Trade at a Standstill—“The Flying Fish”—A Grotesque Exhibition—The Worship of the Strasburg Statue—Arrest of Madame de Bismarck !—An Unlucky Macaw—The Obnoxious Red Herring.

THAT shameful day of Châtillon wrought less upon the populace than one would have feared. Like Didymus, the Parisian was reluctant to believe in what he did not see and feel. But in the waning of September it gradually dawned upon him that war—prosaic, pitiless war—at last was at his doors. The ambulances received tenants ; the broad-shouldered fellows who had been parading idly on the boulevards, with the Geneva cross exposed ostentatiously on their caps and armlets, had an

occupation; the stretchers with their melancholy burdens made an appearance on the thoroughfares. In the café in the Passage Choiseul, where for some weeks I dropped in to pen my diary, the gracious lady of the counter (who was mistress of the establishment) was in mourning, and well it set off her figure. Your true Parisienne is coquettish even in woe. A week previously she had shown me a letter from her brother, dated from the hospital of Amiens. He was a soldier in the 3rd Zouaves, and had been wounded at Sedan.

"It is a mere nothing," he wrote. "A bullet entered by the nape of my neck on the left side, took away a portion of my jaw-bone, and went out at the right of my upper lip. I suppose I shall be somewhat disfigured; but that, dear sister, is all."

The man who wrote those brave words was dead of lockjaw fifteen hours afterwards. His sister sobbed when she heard the news, and disappeared from her customary seat. She was back again on the following day, and smiled so readily that the conclusion was plain that her feelings must have

been considerably assuaged by the compliments paid her on her dead brother's fortitude. Besides, there must have been much consolation for a Frenchwoman, affectionate sister though she was, in the reflection that a neatly fitting black dress, with frills of crape, borders of black lace, and jet ornaments on the bosom like a string of ebon tears solidified, was becoming.

The weather was wondrous bland about this season—weather that would have been most enjoyable in ordinary years ; but existence in “the gay city” (is not that the consecrated phrase ?) had lost its savour. The heavens were blue and clear, the river rippled brightly along under soft winds, the atmosphere was genial and exhilarating ; still men moodily moved hither and thither, as if a pall were spread over them. There was a mute terror abroad. For those who were neither French nor combatants the siege waxed monotonous even at this very early stage. The hours, that once flew by all too quickly on swift, rosy-tipped pinions, were leaden-footed. Boredom and utter stupidity were dominant. There was nothing new to see, next to nobody to

visit or to pay you a visit. The papers were dull as ditchwater; they did not contain even bad jokes. It was hazardous to enter into gossip; the man who expressed a free opinion stood a chance of being arrested as a Prussian. If feelings could be gauged, there was many a weary heart under a padded uniform; the one aspiration of the heroes of the yard-stick and copper scales was that the star of peace might soon return. I had lived in Paris for months without desire to cross the gates; but, somehow or other, the moment it was impossible to get out I felt like the starling in "The Sentimental Journey." What would I not have given in reason for a ramble through the forest of St. Germain, or a pull on the river at Asnières? The city was large enough in all conscience, yet the sense of restraint was oppressive. There was one philosopher within the ring of imprisonment who took things easily—a very old soldier at the Invalides. He was a violinist and an angler, and went down daily, when he was tired of fiddling, to fish by the viaduct at Auteuil. Yet he had his grievance: the cannonade hindered the gudgeon from biting. I took him into

a cabaret once to warm his heart with a glass. We met a hussar there who had been at Sedan. This hussar would have delighted Carlyle. He was a confirmed hero-worshipper, and MacMahon was his hero.

"Ah, *monsieur*, to have watched the tears come into that man's eyes when he saw us running away! *Enfin, pour moi, MacMahon vaut le bon Dieu!*"

I asked him what he thought of de Wimpffen, and he shook his head gravely, and muttered something about traitor.

"*Baste!*" cried the veteran, "you can't expect a man to play the 'Carnival of Venice' on a fiddle out of tune."

That very old soldier was right; de Wimpffen got the lead of the army when it was already beaten, and his name goes down to posterity unjustly linked with the capitulation of Sedan.

"The painful warrior, famousèd for fight,  
After a thousand victories once foiled, .  
Is from the book of honour razèd quite,  
And all the rest forgot for which he toiled."

As Paris could not be quitted, one had to bow to his kismet, and take his walks within Paris. Let me

describe some of its aspects. I was fond of strolling to the Bourse, that building which is Grecian by its colonnade, Roman by its arched windows, of the Revival by its depressed ceiling, and of the Devil by the works and pomps that go on under the ceiling. There was neither bull nor bear in the menagerie of Mammon; the men of eager aspect, the hard-featured, thick-necked and thick-lipped, hook-nosed, steel-eyed speculators, vulgar amongst the vulgar, that used to jostle there some weeks before and exude an oily sweat and bawl and lie—where were they? The bugle of a ruddy-cheeked country-boy, a Mobile Guard, was the answering echo. Mars had kicked out Mammon. If Mars had never done worse, one could hug him. The cries of “Mexicans,” “Italians,” “Rente,” no longer pierced the hot steam hissing from the gamblers’ breaths. “Squad, attention!” “Shoulder arms!” were the orders now in a clear young voice; for drilling was going on all round inside the railings, and within the Bourse itself the staff-officers of the 181st battalion of the National Guard were installed. There were a few groups of the greasy ones under the colon-

nade still—the force of habit; they moped about and babbled of stocks and shares, and spun fairy-tales of victory or defeat, and made daring investments in the clouds, and worked themselves into the conviction that they were operating profitable, very profitable transactions. And then they skipped over to the café opposite, and had an absinthe to spur their jaded stomachs.

From the Bourse to the Church of Our Lady of Victories was but a step. That church was the popular shrine. A great many people, mostly women, who seldom went to a house of worship before, now flocked thither, and knelt and prayed fervently. It might have been very weak and superstitious in supplicating mothers, prostrate before an altar, to think that their sons would return safe from the forts because they had told their beads with that intention. But they believed, and it comforted them. Thus is human nature made. It would be cruel to destroy the fond hope, so with your leave we shall pass, and make no jeers. Whoso scoffs at prayer is a fool. I do not. Heaven forbid it! In that respect I am as old-fashioned as a

Christian of the Catacombs. Of the same way of thinking were those Bretons fingering their rosaries behind a pillar, and moving their lips so quickly that they dazed the eyes to follow them, like a guitar-string newly thrummed. They were praying against time. It is to be hoped they were not of those naughty Bretons I met in a wine-shop of the barrier, who drank more than they were willing to pay for. But then those bad boys had an excuse: they had been in the onion trade, and had made frequent voyages to Glasgow.

From the church I generally meandered to the Grand Boulevard. The saunterer in Paris will always meander to this Grand Boulevard. How changed it was—unswept, unwatered, neglected! The pollen had disappeared from the butterfly's wings. A row of caricatures of the Emperor and Empress and the supporters of the "Macaire family" were hung upon a string on one of the side-walks. A single adjective would characterize them in a bulk—coarse. There was little originality in them; less wit. A woodcut of the first Napoleon pulling the ears of the second, and calling him "*un petit*



*polisson*," was about the least offensive. *Charivari* had been inspired with but one tolerable cartoon. Daumier pictured the ex-Emperor placing a Prussian spiked helmet on the summit of a pyramid. Underneath was written, "The crowning of the edifice." Here and there the "guardians of the public peace" moved to and fro stolidly in threes. At first sight one might have taken them for undertakers' assistants out of place. They were got up most funereally in pilot coat, with burnous, trousers, and cheese-cutter cap, all raven-hued, and just one tiny speck of colour in the unhappy tricoloured cockade over the peak of their ship-steward's head-gear. They paced on their beats like cocks whose wings and spurs had been clipped. After inspecting them intently for a few minutes a light broke in upon me. New "guardian of the public peace" was old *sergent de ville* writ large—clean-shaven, his cocked hat and rapier removed. There were crowds in the open air as ever; the thoroughfares blossomed with uniforms; the omnibuses, which plied as usual, were crowded with freights of soldiery; even the few passers-by in paletot generally

had a red stripe on their trousers to show or hint that they belonged to the National Guard. The females reduced their chignons and went about in modest, pensive grey or black. One day I met Blanche Pierson, the pretty actress of the Gymnase. She had laid aside her sheeny satins and full flounces, and was hardly to be recognised in the little lady tripping by under the tidy robe of the grisette of twenty golden years before. The tulips had been transformed into violets; they were not so bright of colour, but they were sweeter than the flowers from the gardens of Monsieur Worth or Lucy Hocquet. It was correct to be matronly. The war had brought that consolation, at all events. Almost as many shops were shut as on a London Sunday; but among the shops which were open (over and above those which sold bare necessities of life), and drew customers, were the gunsmiths' and the mourning warehouses. The theatres were converted into hospitals. The pleasure-seeker was looked at askance. I encountered a friend who complained that he went into a billiard-room and was almost rudely put to the door with the rebuke,

"This is no time for billiard-playing." Hotels, restaurants, and boarding-houses were empty. There was no business for masons, carpenters, and the like, except on the works for the defence. The employés in the tobacco factories were making cartridges. As for the liberal arts, they were much in the same plight as if Paris were a Gothic metropolis for the time being. The picture-galleries were all closed, and their windows stuffed with sand-bags; the copyists of the Louvre were like frozen-out gardeners—they had no work to do. Not even the sound of a military band was heard. The inventive faculties of the town were all concentrated on the discovery of the readiest means of taking human life, and mutilating God's creatures. We had the Satan gun and other diabolic implements with diabolic names. In addition to these were the inventions for saving life in the form of plastrons of leather, and cuirasses of tin or steel, and *pare-balles* (the design of Disderi the photographer) of two hundred layers of thin gros de Naples.

In fine, there were no alternatives for the idle man but to join an ambulance or shoulder a

musket. Even the penny exhibitions of fat girls, happy families, giants, dwarfs, and phenomenal pigs had disappeared, and the only great attraction left was the "flying fish," a model of an impracticable balloon, which was to be viewed for fifty centimes. Had the proprietor but ten thousand miserable francs to construct a large working specimen of his invention, he made bold to say he would undertake to destroy a division of Prussians with ease, economy, and despatch. But an unappreciative public would not press forward to give him those ten thousand miserable francs. The one house of entertainment which flung back its portals was the Exposition of Hospital Appliances in the Street of the 4th of September, fifty per cent. of the proceeds of which was to be handed over to the fund for the wounded. (This fifty per cent. was very French; in England they would say one-half, but in France one sou is magnified into five centimes.) I visited this Exposition, and, were it not for the object it subserved, would have felt aggrieved. It was got up by a M. Hervé du Lorin, the same gentleman who introduced the brutal

pastime of ratting to Parisian sportsmen. The genius of the mountebank was visible in the pair of toy cannon flanking the turnstile at the door, and in the figure in armour behind the entrance—figure made burlesque by a carpet-bag in a mailed hand. Fancy the "*beau Dunois*" starting for a crusade with one of Mappin's dressing-cases strapped on his back! If this was no time for billiard-playing, surely neither was it for parodies of this pattern.

The statue of Strasburg on the Place de la Concorde was constituted into a sort of Mecca of the National Guard. Nancy "*la coquette*," now nicknamed "*la cocotte*" (for she had yielded to four Uhlans), was passed by with disdain; but the superb effigy of the Rhine city, by Pradier, was worshipped. The citizen-soldiers went there in serried columns, their bayonets circled with flowers, at all hours of the day, to swear to do as their brothers below had done; they deposited wreaths of yellow immortelles, bunches of dahlias, and great purple geraniums in the marble lap of the Genius of the beleaguered city, as on the altar of a

Madonna of heroism. Strong men were to be seen wiping away tears as they gazed at the proud, calm face of the statue, whose pose of serene defiance made one think that the sculptor had the gift of prophecy when he took up the chisel. The mural crown on the brow was smothered under a floral harvest; tricoloured flags fluttered from the four corners; gifts from every quarter of the town, from every class of persons, were suspended round the limbs and perfumed the air. Here it was the infirmières of Paris who paid their homage in gilt letters on banner of white satin to "Strasburg the immortal." There it was the children of Paris who had clubbed their coppers to put up a flag to "Strasburg the heroic." "*Vivre libre ou mourir*" was traced in charcoal in front of the pedestal; the four sides were covered with sonnets, stanzas, or mottoes—heart-cries of love and admiration. A book was open at the foot of the monument to receive the signatures of those who desired to honour the city and its glorious defender, Uhrich. Portraits and biographies of the General were hawked about, and divided sale with the burnished

medals of the Republic and the national cockades. Not even when night fell was the statue forsaken. The twinkling red lights from numberless Venetian lanterns brought out the massive lineaments and their trimming of bouquet and bannerol in warm relief; Strasburg was enthroned patroness of the new Republic.

"Hail, Strasburg the Virgin" shouted a grimy worker in iron from the Faubourg St. Antoine, as he knelt and waved his Phrygian cap.

Strasburg the Martyr, rather should it not be? Virgin pierced with the Seven Swords of sorrow, but still unconquered, impassive as the marble features above, over whose white radiance in the moonlight the *ex voto* lamps threw a flush of resolution.

The spy-mania was another feature of the time. To one writing at this distance of years, the violence and universality of this most childish and contemptible of all types of madness seem incredible. Distrust, foolish and cowardly, was in the air. It was positively dangerous for any flat-breasted female of more than the ordinary height,

and with the suspicion of down on her upper lip, to venture on the streets. She was liable to be seized as a Prussian officer in disguise. I saw a poor woman dragged to a post of the National Guard amid a ravening rabble.

"Whom have they caught now?" I asked.

"Not sure, monsieur; but they say it is *Madame de Bismarck*!"

For a period these spirituel Parisians behaved as if they were demented. Clusters would gather on the boulevards, and stare at the innocent night-lights in a sick-chamber on an attic, on the presumption that it was a signal to the enemy. If a shooting-star whirled across the sky, it was forthwith identified as a warning from foemen without to confederates within. As an English friend remarked with acid humour one day: "If this goes on much longer, we shall have the necks of canaries wrung, under the pretence that the poor little birds are Prussian carrier-pigeons painted yellow."

At length, the Government found it necessary to make proclamation that it had set up five semaphores and electric lights on various points named;



and that private individuals must not take it upon themselves to enter houses suspected to harbour persons communicating with the enemy. The indications given by the public on this head, added the proclamation, were usually groundless. So were they, in truth. In the Avenue des Ternes, for example, the garret of a lone old spinster, who was picking lint for the wounded, was burst into because the flapping of its scarlet and green plumage by a pet macaw in the window was identified as a code of messages to the Germans! When the sovereign people takes to doing its own police, it does it with a zeal—blind sometimes, as in this instance; tyrannic always. The very day this proclamation was issued, there was an instructive scene in the Rue St. Honoré. An indignation meeting was improvised outside the shop of a grocer, a lieutenant in the National Guard, who had charged half a franc for a small red herring. A squad of his own company had to interpose to protect him from the vengeance of the mob, but as a compromise had to consent that his shop should be shut up, and that that small red herring should be

nailed as *corpus delicti* on a shutter. A day was coming when the grocer who would give a red herring for half a franc would be accounted a benefactor to his species.

## CHAPTER IV.

Personal : The Writer's Billet ; his Colleague ; his Exchequer ; his Library—Citizen Prassophagus—Sitting in Council on the Government—A Gastronomical Achievement—The Chief of the Barricades—"The Stone, my General !"—The Anaconda Coil—The Sailors Amuse Themselves—Odds and Ends—Drumming and Drilling—Courbet's Request—*Figaro's* Plan—The Sortie of the 30th of September—Honour to the Brave—Some Acts of Courage.

It is time that I should give the reader some insight into how I, personally, was situated, and should present to him my comrade who shared with me the fatigues and privations of that lugubrious winter. I resided in a ground-floor flat in the Rue de Clichy, leading up from the church of the Trinity to the Boulevard Montmartre. A remarkable street, for there Hugo lived, and there had been the prison for debt—the Haricot Hotel. Incarceration for the crime of owing money having

been abolished (to the annoyance of some raffish folk who liked to settle their accounts in that way), the prison was available as an ambulance. My domicile was off a courtyard, narrow and dark. There were but four rooms in it, a very exiguous kitchen, a very dim bedroom for my housekeeper—Madame Vilma von L——, an aged Austrian lady in reduced circumstances—a barrack-fitted bedroom for myself, and the reception-room. The reception-room also served as library, smoking-divan, and dining-hall. It was not a princely suite, but it was cosy, and I was much more contented there than if I were at a hotel; I was at home, and was my own master. As far as money went, I had all that I required within reason at my command. Whenever I needed it, I had but to call at Blount's bank in the Rue de la Paix; but I did not go there often, as I had made up my mind to live as nearly as possible like the ordinary run of the working population. Accordingly, I allowanced myself on the hand-to-mouth principle. How could I appreciate stubbornness unless I joined in sacrifice? Indeed, I never set much store by money, nor do I now; he

who does, except with the poet Burns's aspiration of being independent, has a soul the size of a shrivelled pea. The miser has a soul the size of a mustard-seed, but a mustard-seed that will not expand. I thank the stars of my nativity that the men I have prized throughout life were not of the class who bent the knee to the golden idol. They would not stoop to pick up a monster nugget if it would soil their fingers. Genius I do respect, virtue, learning, power, exceptional skill—supposing it is only in colouring photographs: dross, no! My comrade, Mr. William O'Donovan—brother to the O'Donovan of the *Daily News*, slain with Hicks Pasha—was of the same school of philosophy; yet we were both cheerful fellows, answering to Washington Irving's description of those free livers on a small scale who are prodigal within the compass of a guinea.

O'Donovan's cheerfulness was of the graver, mine of the frolic kind. He was fond of German literature; I of Italian. He called popular music syllabub silvered by moonlight: I called classic music beer brewed in a mist. He wore his hair long; I mine close-cropped. He smoked pipes, or rather one

venerable vapour-grimed pipe; I, at that epoch, smoked cigars. Every day he came from his roost in the district near the Porte St. Denis, and we compared notes, made excursions, wrote, or held discussions together. The sole art-treasure of my household was a pencil-sketch of a fair Hungarian lady to which my orisons were given. We had not many books, but amongst them were the Bible and Shakespeare—a copious library in themselves—a pocket Horace, about a score of the cheap little publications of the Bibliothèque Nationale (the cream of French literature), odd volumes of Goethe and Goldoni, half a dozen military treatises, Moore's "Life of Sheridan," a few novels by Hackländer and that charming work by Dr. Holmes, "The Professor at the Breakfast Table." O'Donovan brought me a chess-board, and endeavoured to interest me in the game; but it was too intricate for my brain, and so we turned the chess-board into a draught-board, and played an interesting series of matches upon it, until one day we broke it up for kindling-wood. At the opposite side of the street was a wine-shop, kept by a portly Burgundian, who

used to narrate great stories of his exploits in the Insurrection of '48. He must have exhausted his martial ardour at that era, for he did not betray any particular impatience to enroll himself in the active battalions of the National Guard. The Citizen Prassophagus we nicknamed him, he was such an eater of garlic. We resorted to his place for a gossip, for a cup of black coffee, for a litre of wine (nay, I must confess, for a change and to feel more like citizen-workmen, we sometimes tossed off the potato-peel spirit known as *tord-boyau*); and we rattled the balls merrily over a rickety billiard-table with a surface like a map in relief. There was more noise than science in our games. In making a carambole the ball had to go buck-jumping over the obstacles on its course. But it satisfied us, and there was no dread of cutting the cloth.

I am afraid O'Donovan and I would have been marched to Mazas, if not put up against a wall, if our opinions, freely expressed in private committee as we canvassed the acts of Government, were known. Hunger makes one austere. How

we rated that weak, whimpering Favre when we read of his interview with Bismarck at Ferrières. The thought of that lank luminary of the robe, with tears in his voice, pleading with the burly Chancellor was not pleasant. It was too unkind to pit him against such an antagonist—man with no jaw against man with a heavy jaw, drinker of sugared water against quaffer of porter mixed with champagne, emotion against energy. Why, that cocky dwarf, Thiers, with his squat solidity and his inordinate conceit, would have been more of a match for the big Prussian. And then the too ridiculous pomposity of the empty phrase that the German would have “not an inch of our territory, not a stone of our fortresses.” Favre should have been submitted, to a course of shower-baths and dosed with steel. They should have sent a man of physique, with no sentiment, but plenty of red corpuscles in his blood, to beard Bismarck, and, if he so chose, to cheek him. Thus my friend and I settled the matter offhand; but the reader must recollect that fish, game, poultry, and eggs were already very scarce, and it is not easy to be amiable



on low diet. Not that we cared too much for our stomachs' comfort. We were satisfied with siege fare, so long as the three essentials—powder, water, and bread—were to be had. We made sundry experiments in cookery, mostly unsuccessful. The one achievement in that line which we accomplished was a porridge composed of sago and chocolate. It was a mahogany-coloured mess, palatable and filling.

We laid in a stock of the thinnest paper we could procure to write our news-letters upon, and O'Donovan, who was remarkably ingenious, constructed a pair of scales by the help of a few matches, some thread, and two of the tin stoppers of soda-water bottles. We made the weights out of bits of hard dough, which we compared with the ordinary weights in the establishment of Citizen Prassophagus.

About this date orders were issued by the police to all keepers of cafés and wine-shops to shut up their houses at half-past ten o'clock at night. This measure, it was understood, was adopted to remove temptation out of the way of the Provincial Mobiles

who were billeted on the inhabitants. A previous order obliged them to be within their lodgings by ten. As a preventive of such disgraceful scenes as those that followed the rout of Châtillon, it was forbidden to give liquor for payment or otherwise to drunken men, armed or unarmed.

A new office was devised for the popular idol of the hour, the pamphleteer of the *Lanterne*. Henri Rochefort was named "Chief of the Barricades," and forthwith adopted Gustave Flourens as his lieutenant, with the title of Major. A resolution was come to of raising a third line of defence in the rear of the enceinte, where the Parisians would have an opportunity, if matters were pushed to that extremity, of trying their hands at the fighting they are famed for. The first barricades were thrown up in the streets of St. Denis, and on a system admirable for its economy. The citizens in power issued orders that every individual, who passed, should add one stone to the nearest barricade. So rigidly was this rule enforced that Carré de Bellemare, the Commandant of the Place, was stopped by the National Guardsman who was

keeping ward ; the sentinel presented arms, gazed reproachfully at his superior officer, and murmured :

“The stone, my General?”

“You’re right,” said the General, as he quietly went back to bring his contribution to the cairn.

We two kept ourselves very much to ourselves. A legion of foreigners styling themselves “The Friends of France” had been organized, and many compatriots had joined its ranks ; but we held aloof. We had our own axes to grind ; and moreover, a special injunction had been laid upon me that I was on no account to swap the pen for the rifle. I was to recollect that I was in Paris as historiographer of combat, not as combatant. If the “Friends” were to adopt a uniform suggestive of the countries they hailed from, it would have exhausted all the hues of the rainbow ; they were of every nationality—even to Turkey and Wallachia. As it was, they were content with an unobtrusive, serviceable tunic of drab, and were amongst the most tractable and best-disciplined volunteer soldiers in the city, for most of them had seen service. There was one daring young Irish officer named

Casey. He had two brothers, also under arms, but in different corps for a beautiful reason : they had a mother, and, being good sons, they did not care to have her left alone in her widowhood by the chance of all three being wiped out by the explosion of a single shell.

It became plain to us in the last week of September that the coil of the enemy round Paris was strong and strict : it was an anaconda coil. There was no getting in or out, except at immense risk and by phenomenal luck. Where the Prussian was not visible, he made himself felt. When the electric light sent a great glare like the flash of a Brobdingnag's dark lantern from the forts, gangs of workmen were caught piling up breastworks. There could be no doubt of it—he was there, and busy ; and the watchword was passed, “ *Prenez garde à vous, sentinelle !* ” The needle of the glass still pointed to “ set fair,” which was an advantage for the foe. On the morning of the 26th a few shells were pitched from Mont Valérien towards the copse of Croissy, right opposite on the other side of the Seine. There was a hurried scamper of infantry towards Bougival

in consequence. From the southern line of forts reports came that masses of troops had passed during the night behind the plateau of Châtillon towards Sceaux and Versailles. The invader was digging a trench round the cemetery of Choisy-le-Roi, and was fortifying himself at Dugny, over against St. Denis; but he made no offensive movement. With a good glass dark blotches could be descried on the heights in the outskirts. Those blurs on the landscape were his posts and bivouacs. Whenever horsemen or a line of provision-waggons blackened the roads within range of the forts, the sailors, who were perpetually hanging about with telescopes, walked quietly over to one or other of the heavy pieces of marine ordnance, there was a yellowish-red flash and a roar, a cone of smoke, a hissing sound high up, and generally a fo'c'stle cheer as a cloud of dust rose in the distance. There might have been a few horses disembowelled, a few human heads carried off or made mash of, over where the dust rose; that was why the hilarious tars were boisterous.

An *estafette* crept in from Tours on the morning

of the 27th, with news that Bismarck's answer to Favre had been placarded over France, that the provinces were rising, and that troops under General de Polhès (yet another Breton) were harassing the enemy's rear. Posters were put up on this day notifying that courts-martial of three officers could be summoned within four-and-twenty hours for the trial of robbers, spies, or marauders, and that sentences could be executed *séance tenante* by the picket on duty in the hall of meeting. The Minister of Agriculture announced that the carcasses of five hundred oxen and four thousand sheep were to be placed daily at the disposal of the inhabitants. This measure had been rendered necessary by the conduct of the butchers, who began shutting up their stalls when they discovered they were not to be let charge their own prices. According to the new arrangements, butchers whose names were registered at the Mairies were to receive every day a quantity of dead meat proportioned to their customers, which they were to retail on Government account at the regulated tariff, deducting four sous on each kilogramme for their expenses. Official

decrees also appeared establishing a mid-air mail service by balloon, and giving liberty to the public to send open messages on cards for half the postage of ordinary letters. Shots were dropped now and again from the forts to let the Herren know we were alive, but they kept as quiet as ferrets. Like the ferrets, they were viciously burrowing. A fire broke out about noon on this date in the petroleum dépôt at the Buttes-Chaumont, *close to a powder-magazine!* It was got under by throwing earth upon the flames.

On the 28th I took a long walk through the town. The air vibrated with the ruffle of drums. Companies of the National Guard (whose drill was now obligatory, two hours daily) were going through the manual and platoon on all the open spaces. There were over 300 battalions organized, the greater part equipped with the *fusil à tabatière*, an easily handled breech-loader of inferior range. If an average of 800 be allowed for each battalion—the maximum of 1,500 could seldom, if ever, be reached—that would give 240,000 as the strength of the force. In fact, it was almost a *levée en masse* ;

the "five trades of Paris" had turned soldiers; the paunchy, the purblind and the hunchback were under arms; still there must have been many good men and true amongst them. But the whole organization was cursed by the system of electing its officers. Some of the battalions of the richer districts had provided themselves with seductive young *vivandières*, uniformed like the regimental daughters of comic opera. While the Nationals were progressing, the Mobiles were not inactive. They were being licked into shape with praiseworthy celerity. Booths were erected for their reception on the exterior boulevards, pumps were sunk at hand, and water for cooking and washing was abundant. But provisions were going up ominously. On the 28th of September, butter fetched seven francs the pound.

We were diverted with proclamations throughout the whole duration of this weary investment. For instance, there was on the hoardings a copy (the third printed) of the *Bulletin de la Municipalité*, a tri-weekly record of the doings at the Mairies—notices of the sinking of wells, the forma-



tion of civic corps, the hygienic condition of the district, and so forth. This copy contained a letter from Gustave Courbet, the painter, representing a number of his fellow-artists, demanding that the Napoléon Column on the Place Vendôme should be pulled down! Truly, a wicked and grotesque proposition, not more wicked and grotesque, however, than one in *Figaro* of the following day, seriously suggesting that 50,000 or 60,000 men should be flung on Germany to "rob, burn, and sack town and country; blow up bridges, destroy railways, and carry ruin and devastation everywhere." A theorist wished to pay off the National Debt once by bottling Thames water, and selling it at five shillings a pint, as a patent medicine. He was as practical as *Figaro*. The barber should stick to his lathering-brush.

On the last day of September, a series of simultaneous reconnaissances were organized; the principal, towards the south-west, was more in the nature of a sortie, having for design to cut off the enemy's line of communication between Choisy-le-Roi and Versailles. This was undertaken from

Villejuif as base, under the personal supervision of Trochu. At four in the morning, the troops of Vinoy's corps were formed up in line from the redoubt of the Moulin Saquet on the left, to that of the Hautes-Bruyères, their extremities rather stronger than the centre. Chevilly, a village right in front, making the apex of a triangle of which the redoubts would be the points at the base, was the objective. There the Prussians had strongly entrenched themselves; they had pierced loopholes in the houses, thrown up barricades, and sheltered their flanks by a ditch and breastwork, on their right to the farm of Saussaye, on the road to Fontainebleau, and on their left towards the hamlet of l'Hay. Shortly after dawn, a cannonade was opened from the adjoining forts and the two redoubts on this position, the French right and left descending at the same time by converging columns. The centre had been ordered to stand fast, so as to be available as a reserve. The distance between the two fronts was about a mile, but the enemy's skirmishers were out almost to the confines of Villejuif, hid in the vineyards and in every tuft of bushes. As the

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French pushed on, they withdrew, until the former got within a couple of hundred yards of their line of works, when the fusillade on both sides was something appalling. It kept rattling like a continuous drum-beat. For a moment the French were unsteady, but a bugler blew the charge, and the young soldiers who were wavering plucked up courage and went on again. The advance was made in extended order, the men firing from the knee. At last, they made a rush for the first line of trench, and carried it at l'Hay, Chevilly, and Thiais, after a fierce wrestle at the bayonet's point; but the Prussians had only fallen back to a second and stronger line, from which they poured a murderous fire on their assailants. The struggle at this stage was desperate, the smoke from the infantry oscillating backwards and forwards, as success inclined to one side or the other. So close were the combatants that the artillery dare not join in, lest it might mow down friend as well as foe. The French left absolutely got forward to Choisy-le-Roi by Thiais, but had to fall back, considering the enemy's strength. Brigadier-General Guilhem was

shot, leading into action the 35th and 42nd, who behaved gallantly. The head of Blaise's column (a brigade of Maud'huy's division), which penetrated Thiais, was on the point of taking a battery. Some accounts pretend it did take it, but was unable to carry it off for want of horses. Reinforcements having streamed up on the enemy's side, the "retire" had to be sounded, and that disagreeable movement was effected in an orderly manner before mid-day, thanks to the cover of the forts of Montrouge, Bicêtre, Ivry, and Charenton, which thundered in chorus. This was a very spirited action while it lasted. The French loss was about one thousand. There was no gain, except in the training to their work which these brushes gave to raw soldiers. General d'Exea made a demonstration on the extreme left towards Créteil with a brigade, but had to discreetly acknowledge that he had more than his match in front of him. The German was too strong and too wary. Ducrot went out westwards, as far as he dared, towards Bougival, but could not entice the wily foeman into showing himself.

There was a brief armistice on the Choisy-le-Roi front to bury the dead. The Prussians gave up the corpse of General Guilhem, rendering it on its passage every homage which chivalry could dictate. The "barbarians" saluted the body as it was borne by, as if the hero were their own. They had with a generous sympathy covered it with flowers. A few hours previously they had put ten bullets into it. War is something of a paradox.

The 30th was rich in feats of dogged resolution. Corporal Ardit, of the 42nd, must have had the instinct of discipline strongly developed in him. He had both wrists shot through at Chevilly, when he coolly fell out of the ranks, saluted, and asked permission of his captain to fall to the rear. Private Admard, of the same regiment, was hit twice. He got one of his comrades to give his wounds a rude dressing, and then quietly resumed firing at the Germans. Corporal Graciot, of the 110th of the Line,\* took up his stricken

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\* The former *régiments de marche* were now numbered and spoken of as if they were ordinary Line regiments.

lieutenant to carry him to a place of safety; at the same moment the faithful fellow was wounded in the right hand, and the officer killed in his arms; he let the corpse fall, clutched a chassepot, turned round with bent brows to the enemy, advanced, and continued to load and fire upon them till he dropped from exhaustion. Drummer G  rodias, of the 112th, was worthy to rank beside Barras, the famous tambour under the first Republic, who beat the charge after both his legs had been swept off by a round shot. While G  rodias was plying the sticks on the parchment at Chevilly a splinter of shell smashed through the drumhead. He looked at the instrument, half-amused, half-amazed, then snatching a gun from the hands of a dead comrade beside him rushed to the front and showed that he could fight himself as well as encourage others to fight. One was sorry to hear he was wounded, but he did not retire from the field till the close of the action. Sergeant-Major Guerroy, of the 35th, valiantly rallied his company thrice at the storming of Chevilly, the officers without exception having been killed or wounded. So that those

who imagine that in the colossal struggle the French all lay down to be walked over, do an injustice to a most gallant nation. Defeat had its heroes as well as victory.

## CHAPTER V.

The Gloomy Boulevard—Beaconsfield on Paris—Portents in the Sky—Louis Blanc to the English—Bad Tidings—The Strasburg Spire—The Balloon Express—England on the Eve of Revolution—A Foggy Bulletin—Explosion of a Torpedo—Opening of the Schools—Precautions at the Writer's Billet—Major Flourens Manifests—The Battle of Clamart—Blow-up of a Powder-Mill—The "Young Gambetta" Takes a Flight—Louis Blanc Says "No!"—National Guards: a Contrast—Aëronauts in a Strait—The *Standard* is Smuggled in.

DULL October stole upon us insensibly. We had days that were chill and wet and foggy, and now and again bleak breezes blew off the withering leaves. It was saddening to take an evening walk on the line of the Grand Boulevard. Those who knew the brilliant and crowded thoroughfare of yore would hardly recognise it in the badly lit cold-looking avenue, melancholy by its border of ash-tinted trees, silent but for the news-boys calling



out the late editions of their papers, the broad roadway deserted but for the rare omnibuses, the broad pavements traversed by grave men in half-military dress, and the once riotous cafés half denuded of customers. No more gay toilettes, no more bustling groups outside the façades of the open theatres dazzling with light, no more jesting revellers taking Sardanapalian views of life from the terrace of Tortoni's, no more rolling equipages and befurred lackeys. The bloom had been brushed off the *Via Lætosa* by the coarse hand of invasion. The money-changers had taken the bullion out of their windows; the jewellers had suspended business; every second shop was dark, as if the shadow of coming bankruptcy had fallen upon it. Here and there the gliding figure of a female, with the blight of respectable penury betraying itself in every crease of her well-worn gown, might have been detected pausing at the side of some Italian warehouseman's store, as if to "cloy the hungry edge of appetite by bare imagination of a feast." This was war: with such sights as these where a short season before the Hours capered to the pipe of

Pan, and Comus grinned, and ruddy Bacchus reeled—pshaw! I mean where Thérèse sang, and Offenbach played, and everybody laughed, and there were suppers that recalled the Regency, and delirious dancing such as Mabilles only could have presented, and much luxury that was languishing, and much that was robust, when the only chimes one heard were the tinkling of bells for more champagne—one began to think that the Prussian bulletins which called this war a judgment had some pretence of reason in them. Not that Paris was worse than any great Teutonic city. If it put the paint on its cheeks in public, they did in private. Berlin had quite as strong a family-likeness to Gomorrah as more sharp-sighted observers than I affected to discover in the French metropolis. This may be good-natured prejudice; but if I am wrong, I am wrong in decent company. With the author of “Coningsby” it is to be hoped one may see in fair Paris not a City of the Plain, but the “airy and bright-minded supreme capital of Manners.” That souvenir of Gomorrah came into my mind as I paced the boulevard one night, and saw a lurid

glare like the reflection from a thousand blazing foundries roofing the town with red canopy. There was a very pious acquaintance of mine who had grown very nervous from much poring over Revelation. He had quitted Paris before the investment, telling me in awe-stricken tone that he knew by some cunning totting-up of occult ciphers that the city was "doomed." Was this a foretokening? The portentous sheet moved and glimmered overhead as if shaken, and the streets soon filled with curious watchers. Was it another petroleum fire? No; the Pompiers had not stirred from their posts. There that tremulous etching of flame-streaks hung up mysteriously still.

"It is an Aurora Borealis," suggested one scientific onlooker.

A woman crossing herself exclaimed, "No, it is a supernatural omen; I saw the same during the Italian war!"

The old wives' belief timidly inclined that it was a Belshazzar's warning traced in fire. Later on, I learned that the strange sign in the heavens was no more unaccountable than a new mode of signalling

with electric lights from Mont Valérien. Those who had half hoped that Paris would share the fate of Gomorrah were disappointed. What if Capua, by the touch of peril, were to be transformed into Lacedæmon!

On the 1st was published a long letter of Louis Blanc to the English people. It was eloquent, but developed nothing striking. He pretended that France was opposed to this war. I think that Paris, at least, was in favour of it, and I am sure that many who abused the Emperor and his policy would have licked the dust off his boots, and would have hailed him Cæsar, had he come back conqueror.

The 2nd was the third Sunday since the investment, a fine day, but one of evil news, which the populace, acted on by the weather probably, took with even resignation. The Government placarded that Strasburg and Toul had capitulated. That meant much. It meant that 80,000 additional troops would be at the disposal of the enemy for service against Paris within eight days. Disquieting whispers went round. It was rumoured

with bated breath that the Count de Chambord had been proclaimed King of France at Tours, and that the army of the Loire—the army which was to rescue Paris—was a myth. And what was Paris doing to rescue itself? Not much, apparently. The sailors on the forts dropped an occasional projectile over the ground where the Germans were suspected to be erecting their batteries, to “keep their hands in.” The arrival of General Burnside, U.S.A.—the same who was beaten by Lee, and lost 12,000 men at Fredericksburg, in the American Civil War, but retrieved his laurels the year following by repulsing Longstreet at Knoxville—was announced. What could it signify?

On the 3rd, O'Donovan and I were busy finishing our correspondence in preparation for a balloon which was advertised to leave on the morrow. Hard work is a mighty solace. In the heat of occupation we did not care to remember that fat geese were selling at thirty shillings, that eggs and fish were scarce and bad, that there was little milk and less butter. What did we reck? Bread and wine were not lacking, and there was a noble re-

serve of horseflesh within the walls. We were more exercised by thoughts as to what condition the spire of the Strasburg Cathedral had been left in. It was one of the highest and most elegant in Europe. It would be too bad if the index that pointed the way to Heaven should have been destroyed by the shells of that monarch who rendered such pious thanksgiving to the dwellers in Heaven for every victory—victory which meant hecatombs of slaughter. O'Donovan, who was steeped to the lips in historical lore, told me how the spire had escaped destruction during the great Revolution. A ferocious Jacobin named Teterel demanded that it should be taken down, because its great height was an outrage on the principle of equality. One of his associates, who had sufficient admiration for art not to appreciate this piece of Vandalism, but who dared not openly protest against it, made the witty proposition that the red cap should be placed on the top of it, so that the “immortal symbol of liberty should be seen from afar.” His amendment was carried, and the steeple was saved.

We had to take time by the forelock, for the

balloons were kittle cattle. We had to send as early as we could, and as much as we could, in as small compass as possible, which was easy for O'Donovan, for he was as accomplished a micro-caligrapher as Peter Bales or Matthew Buckinger. But sometimes, as now, we had hurried with our toil for nothing.

That balloon did not leave on the 4th. We could see it still at the roadstead on the heights of Montmartre. The *aéronauts* were whistling for a wind. It was called the "*Armand Barbès*," and belonged to a joint-stock company. I made an effort to get a corner in it for a courier to take out some despatches, and found there were but two seats vacant. I could have had my choice of those as a favour for the trifle of five thousand francs, that is to say, two hundred pounds sterling. If the balloon were perforated by a Prussian missile, or if the courier broke his neck in the descent, or if my despatches were thrown out to lighten it, I would have to put up with the loss. There was no insurance against perils of the air; and the rule was strictly "no money returned." On no account would the com-

pany take correspondence unless through the Government, and I had nigh worn out my trouser going on my knees to the Barnacles of the Republican Circumlocution Office in the vain search for favours. So I resolved to trust to luck and the ordinary letter-boxes. We were now over fifteen days locked up in an iron chest, and only three balloons had left. Calculating by averages, close on three million letters had been posted in the interval, which would be equivalent in weight to some three thousand kilogrammes. And how many kilogrammes of correspondence did these three balloons take out? Just *one hundred*. Naturally, the large proportion, perhaps all, were State papers. We could send no news away; we could get no news in. We were asking ourselves what the rest of France was doing; had the mission of Thiers (who was touting for allies) failed; had the Republic been proclaimed in Spain? At this time we heard with amazement, until the source of the information was known to be *Figaro*, that a revolution was on the point of breaking out in England.

Military reports appeared every day now, signed



by General Schmitz, Chief of the Staff, who would appear to have been installed as Sub-editor of war bulletins, with unrestrained power to manipulate copy. The candour of these bulletins may be estimated from the specimen on this 4th of October. It reported that a small reconnaissance had been made in the fog of the morning from the fort of Nogent towards Neuilly-sur-Marne, by three companies of Mobiles of the Drôme and half a troop of Spahis. The Prussian outposts drew back to a wood where some 500 of their comrades were ambushed, and the Arab horsemen—can such folly be credited?—charged to its verge and fired point-blank on its defenders. Twenty Prussians toppled over, of course, and the Spahis lost—two horses killed and one wounded! The fog would hardly account for this result, after a “*fusillade très nourrie*” by the men with the needle-guns at a “*petite distance*.” The genius that inspires epitaphs must preside over official bulletins.

General Appert sent in a message that a torpedo had exploded accidentally at the gate of Sablonville, beyond the Arch of Triumph, wounding three

workmen, a Free-shooter, and a woman. The accident was due to a supposed break in the isolating envelope. Experiments were being made with a torpedo uncharged, 150 yards from the point where this was buried, and it is conjectured the electricity by which these infernal machines are set off was communicated by some deviation of current.

The schools and lycées were opened to-day as usual by a wise order from M. Simon, and a commission was also formed under his direction, at the Hôtel de Ville, to inquire into the question of primary education. He addressed a letter to his colleague, the Mayor, alluding to the "solid, virile, and austere instruction" the Republic should give, to the necessity of "bodily exercise so strangely neglected up to the present," and to the utility of the parish making sacrifices to give boys of conspicuous talents, the sons of poor parents, access to the higher branches of study. He wound up by insisting that France could only be saved, and the Republic established, by raising the moral and intellectual standard of the country, so as to get rid

of the two great scourges of humanity—monopoly and war. These beatified sentiments were penned amid the tuck of drums, and echoed by the rumbling of cannon.

On the 5th of October, when I approached my window to take note of the weather, I saw a heap of sand in the middle of the courtyard and four barrels of water, with sacking neatly superposed, planted round it in square. This, with the placing of mattresses between the window-panes and the blinds, had been prescribed as precaution against percussion and live shells. At noon of this day five battalions of the National Guard, constituting a legion, under the command of Gustave Flourens, presented themselves armed, led by a band of music, at the Hôtel de Ville, to demand that the citizen-soldiers should be furnished with chassepots,\* and permitted immediately to make sorties in force ; that Government commissioners should be sent at once to the departments to rouse

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\* They were armed at the time with the *tabatière*, a rifle which bore much the same relation to the chassepot that the Snider does to the Martini-Henri.

them to action ; that the municipal elections for Paris should be forthwith held ; and that the population should be rationed in proportion to the provisions in store. Gambetta answered that the latter subjects were "under consideration." In response to the first demand, General Trochu made the only reply a soldier could—"that purposeless sorties by large masses of undisciplined men, unsupported by artillery perfectly organized, were hazardous."

There were no tidings from the provinces yet, but some of the fly-sheets of the New York pattern had insinuated that the Government was in possession of tidings, but cushioned them ; that M. Crémieux had sent a gloomy report from Tours ; and that a portion of the Army of the Loire had been defeated. The *Official Journal* apologized for publishing no ill news on the ground that it had none to publish.

There had been heavy booming of long-range guns for hours on this day along the line southwest from Montrouge to Mont Valérien, but not until the 6th did we learn the full significance of

the hurly-burly. Here, *verbatim et literatim*, is the first paragraph of the military report by Sub-editor Schmitz:—"A reconnaissance made by four companies of the 5th Battalion of the Mobiles of the Seine in the village of Clamart, towards one o'clock in the afternoon, turned out very fortunate (*à très-heureusement réussi*). We had no wounded, and our soldiers brought back two guns, a sabre, and a cross-belt."

Who could weep over the capitulation of Strasbourg after that? France had her revenge. She had taken two guns, a sabre, and--please to remember--the cross-belt. O, General Boum!

The pride over this glorious victory was damped by an accident in the Rue Gavel, on the Left Bank, where a powder-mill blew up, killing thirteen persons. The dangerous fulminate known as *poudre blanche*, composed of two parts of chlorate of potash and one of powdered sugar, was in process of manufacture there. Could other result have been expected? Chlorate of potash had long been discarded in England, on account of the risks in triturating it.

At long last, on the 7th of October, the balloons were able to leave. About half-past eleven in the forenoon, after Nadar had made a couple of experimental ascents in a captive balloon, he declared that there was a favourable current high up, and that voyagers might trust themselves to it. The Minister of the Interior, who had been chatting with Louis Blanc on the Place St. Pierre (the balloon-stead, if I may coin a word), bade him good-bye, and stepped into the basket, a carpet-bag in one hand. M. Spuller, his secretary, followed, and then an aëronaut. The "young Gambetta," as it was the fashion to call him (he was thirty-five—what would Frenchmen have called Pitt?), looked excessively pale; M. Spuller made little paralytic motions from excitement; the captain of the airship took matters coolly. He was in his element, or about soon to be.

"*Lachez tout!*" he cried; and as the ropes were released, the "Armand Barbès" rose to the region of the favourable current, and then, catching the wind on its beam, moved to the north. For a moment it ducked behind the heights of St. Denis, was lost

to view, and a throb of pain shot through the immense crowd that was looking skywards. The point where the balloon had disappeared was directly over the Prussian lines. But it quickly reappeared, sailing majestically on its course. A second balloon, chartered by Americans bound for England to speculate in firearms on the French account, rose, became a distant soap-bubble, and vanished. Louis Blanc had been commissioned to go to England likewise, but the little gentleman declined. He did not like the mode of travelling. He had made a trial ascent.

"How did you feel when you were above?" asked a friend.

"Excessively anxious to get down again," was the reply.

A column under General Martenot advanced to Malmaison by Nanterre and Rueil on the morning of the 8th, which was cold and rainy, with a capricious, marrow-searching breeze. When it got to the wall of the park surrounding the favourite château of Josephine, the pioneers effected a breach, and the troops streamed in expecting to fall on the

Prussians, but no Prussians were there. An entry at another point was made, with a like result. Both parties joined and pressed towards Bougival, but saw nothing except a few horsemen. While this fruitless operation was going on towards the left, a company of volunteers of the National Guard crossed the plain of Gennevilliers higher up, and had a smart exchange of rifle-fire with the German outposts on the other bank of the Seine, between Argenteuil and Bezons. This was the baptism of blood for the National Guard, and well they bore it. Two of them were killed, and eleven wounded.

But there were other National Guards, those of the turbulent faubourgs, amongst whom agitators had been fomenting bad feeling. They clamoured for immediate municipal elections. While some of their comrades were lying stark at Gennevilliers, and others were being carried to hospital, these fanatics marched to the Hôtel de Ville. They reached it at two o'clock in the afternoon. Luckily, there were only some three hundred of them. They raised the cry of "Live the Commune!" But a battalion of order-loving citizen-soldiers was drawn up, and



barred the entrance to the Town House. Some Mobiles and *Douaniers* were stationed in the inner courtyard in support. General Trochu rode up, looked at the manifestants, and rode off again. General Tamisier, Commander of the National Guard, came out of the Hôtel de Ville. The echo of a big gun from the forts was heard.

"Do you hear the cannon?" said the old General. "Pretty moment you choose to sow discord!"

The *émeute* was conquered. "Down with the Commune!" cried a National Guardsman. Battalions of the citizen-soldiers marched up in quick succession, until 10,000 men were massed on the square. The members of the Provisional Government emerged, and passed them in review; Jules Favre made a short speech; a violent shower came down, and the "patriots" sheepishly dribbled off. They were balked by a downpour, but there was boding of mischief in their scowls and lengthened under-jaws.

The weather that dispersed the proletarians, and sent the Germans from their saps to their burrows, was not so auspicious to France in another respect.

An injudicious attempt was made to launch a balloon from La Villette. At three o'clock it went up, carrying three passengers, one of whom, an army contractor, was entrusted with Government despatches for Tours. It mounted slowly, and held a northerly course, but abruptly collapsed and descended at the other side of St. Denis, in a swamp between the French and Prussian lines. Fire was opened on the unfortunate trio, who had to scramble up to their necks in water and simulate death. In this strait they had to remain for three long hours, until darkness set in, when one of them swam to the French side. He was arrested on landing, but was recognised, when help was sent to his half-perishing associates. The despatches were saved.

General Burnside had entered Paris for the second time on the 6th of October, it leaked out on the 10th, and had left as he came. We were lost in surmise as to the object of his visit. Some assumed that he had a semi-official mission from Bismarck to Jules Favre; others, that he had merely come to shake hands with his friend Mr. Washburne, and take a sherry-cobbler at the Grand Hotel. Possibly,

through his kind medium, a couple of copies of the *Standard* had got past the lines, and the *Patrie* published from one of them details of a conversation in which Count Bismarck intimated that the Germans intended to take the city by famine. On the other hand, the *Siècle* averred that General Burnside had frequently stated that the arm on which the invader relied was not the Krupp guns, but internal dissensions. Neither prospect was agreeable. There was no hope from the German; he was not magnanimous in his triumph—he was the leech who would not quit the skin *nisi plena cruoris*. For the three weeks that he had been in front of us, he had confined himself to simple investment. He had succeeded in cutting off all communications, and driving us back on our own resources, but he had attempted no aggression. He had applied himself to establishing works to protect himself, leaving those of attack in the second plan; but after he had seen that balloon, with Gambetta, leave, and had acquired knowledge that France was preparing a levy *en masse*, his tactics changed. His sappers were to be seen delving

away by daylight in the zone of the forts of Montrouge and Bicêtre to the south, and a shell exploded in the middle of fort Ivry, being the first projectile to attain the outer belt of defences. The force of National Guards under arms by this date was enormous, too bulky in my opinion—little short of 600,000. They were well armed; 95,000 had the *tabatière* breechloader, 120,000 the percussion rifle, 55,000 had smooth-bores, and 10,000 were supplied with carbines and guns of different models. Those who were not armed were organized as auxiliary sappers.

## CHAPTER VI.

Court-martialling the Cowards—Patriotic Insanity—Roche-  
fort and the Ladies—The Combat of Bagneux—How a  
Titled Hero Fell—The Badeners Surprised—Prussians  
to the Rescue—The Wounded Würtemberg Officer—  
Fraternization on the Field—The Unreasonableness of  
War—A Palace in Flames—Dialogue between an  
Alsatian and a Bavarian—Colonel Lloyd-Lindsay, V.C.  
—De Dampierre's Funeral—The Vanishing House—  
The Locomotive Bush—Trochu's Plan—Liberty of the  
Press—The *Standard* Denounced—The Writer Remon-  
strates "too cavalierly"—Respublica can Do no Wrong  
—Long Life to the Duke of Strasburg—The Armaments  
—The Provisional Government Shows its Hand.

A BATCH of the runagates at Châtillon were  
brought before a court-martial on the 11th of  
October, and seven were condemned to death.  
Every dastard in the lot had his excuse cut and  
dry. One went to the rear with a wounded com-  
rade, and did not know his way back to his regi-  
ment; another was drinking with a civilian, and

rushed to the front when he heard fighting was going on, but by some mistake took the road to Paris. If credit were to be given to the misunderstood knaves who were arrested fleeing without arms to the city, they were searching for an opportunity to distinguish themselves. They had left Bull Run solely to take Canada. Touching Bull Run, not one of them had the excuse of the English soldier who turned tail at that famous panic.

"What! you in the pack of cowards?" cried a Queen's Messenger. "Surely it was not for that you got the Crimean and Mutiny medals!"

"No, sir," said the rascal; "but I'm a sergeant-major in this service, and you don't know how hard it is to die on three dollars a day!"

One of the men condemned, an artillery driver, pleaded that his horse had been wounded, and he had trotted it back to town to have the bullet extracted. This fellow, it transpired, had cut the traces of his team, and galloped off the field while his battery was actually engaged. He was seized on the boulevards, where he was relating to a circle of simple auditors that 500,000 Prussians had

surprised them, and were already in possession of the forts. These forts kept working in all conditions of weather. What an incessant booming they made! As each shot which described a dazzling orbit in mid-air cost the State from thirty shillings to six pounds sterling in English money, it will be admitted that war is among the luxuries which are expensive.

There were occasional developments of patriotic insanity to vary the tedium of existence. One Felix Belly posted on the walls a call to the women of Paris to form a battalion of Amazons of the Seine. They were to be clothed in a sort of Bloomer costume, blue and orange; and were to ask the Government to provide them with carbines, and a franc and a half a day, like the National Guards. In emulation with him came a M. Jules Allix, who proposed that the citizenesses should be armed with a brand-new invention, a thimble with a bodkin containing prussic acid at the tip, which could be acted on by a spring and driven into the hand of the first blonde German who dared to look softly into their democratic eyes. The citizenesses

themselves had a better inspiration. A deputation of them went to the Hôtel de Ville to demand that they should be accepted as hospital nurses, and that the big, strong, lazy fellows who were hulking about the ambulances should be packed off to the ramparts and made to fight. Some of these zealous volunteer Sisters of Charity had lungs and biceps. Few patients under their care would dare to object to their daily regimen. The gallant Rochefort, a great pet with the ladies of the lower classes since he Billingsgated the Empress, received the deputation, and, of course, promised them that their just demands would be "taken into consideration." That answer does for every deputation. Fortunately for Rochefort, the citizenesses did not ask to kiss him. In 1848 it was thus the brawny dames de la Halle, fishwives *et hoc genus*, desired to salute Lamartine. "My friends," said the poor poet, "it is women only who kiss; but you are men by your patriotism. Like men I shall treat you—we shall shake hands!"

On the 13th the comparative inaction of the previous twelve days was broken. The rumour had



begun to spread that the enemy had drawn off the mass of his forces to meet the army of succour expected from the Loire; but an offensive reconnaissance pushed forward over the ground which was the scene of the French repulse on the 19th ult. proved that, if such were indeed the case, he had not neglected to leave a strong rearguard behind him. In the morning Blanchard's division of the 13th Corps, under cover of the line of forts to the south, from Issy to Cachan, was divided into three columns, to which were assigned the duty of retaking the plateau of Châtillon. The reader will remember that there was a redoubt on this plateau which had to be evacuated, and eight pieces left behind. Those pieces were spiked before they were abandoned, but the Prussians were not able to arm the redoubt, for the good reason that it lay under the fire of three forts. Still, as the position afforded a capital look-out point, it was considered important to occupy it temporarily, if only to restore the confidence which had been shaken by its loss. The column on the right of the attack consisted of the 13th Régiment de Marche, and had orders to go

forward in the direction of Clamart ; that of the centre, under command of General Susbille, was to advance to the assault of Châtillon ; while the left, which was to take Bagneux, comprised battalions of the Mobiles from the Côte d'Or and the Aube under orders of Colonel de Grandcey. The battalion from the latter department had never been under fire ; but that from the Côte d'Or had been already in action, and had behaved very well. The advance was made simultaneously under cover of a heavy and well-directed cannonade from Issy, Montrouge, and Vanves. The village of Bagneux, on the French left, was the principal point of attack at the opening of the little engagement. At about eight o'clock a line of skirmishers went cautiously towards it, the percussion shells from Montrouge crashing through the roofs of the houses on the outskirts of the hamlet next them, and dislodging the enemy, so that on the whole the task of the Mobiles was comparatively easy. As the Germans fell back, the column started from the route d'Orleans, taking the slope of the hill towards the village at the double. A lively fusillade was opened on it, which was

vigorously replied to by the Mobs, who pressed to the front gallantly, their officers leading. After an interchange of compliments of this kind for nigh half an hour the enemy was noticed to slacken in his fire ; the Mobs rushed on the village with the bayonet, and after a brief resistance on the part of such of its defenders as were not able to join in the retreat, which had apparently been ordered, Bagneux was in the occupation of the French. The Count de Dampierre, commandant of the battalion of the Aube, was shot in the temple as he jumped on the first barricade at the end of the village street, and fell as he was waving his sword to encourage his men to the assault. The brave gentleman breathed his last in the ambulance of Arceuil at five in the afternoon. He had fought like a hero ; he died like a Christian.

A number of prisoners were taken at this point ; they were mostly very young, beardless boys of eighteen, and wore the uniform of the Baden contingent, long blue greatcoats and flat caps with the arms of the Grand Duke on the front. The enemy had fallen back to the village of Châtillon,

on which the strength of the French attack was now concentrated. The fort of Vanves poured a terrible hail of shell on the heights, and the infantry of the Line moved on steadily under its protection. The borders of the village were reached, and the French infantry went ahead with a cheer, bayonets at the charge, as soon as the barricade at the extremity of a street came in view. This was carried with a rush, and a second behind it, almost without loss. The Germans evidently had a wholesome respect for cold steel, nevertheless it would be unfair to say they ran. As they withdrew (that is the proper expression), they kept up a steady fire from every wall, hedge, and bush—every cover, in fact, behind which a man could hide himself while he discharged his piece. The column of attack, still pushing on, got to the highway that leads from Châtillon to Clamart. Pressed on every side, the Germans had to hasten their retreat; forty prisoners surrendered to the French, and the colours of the 14th Régiment de Marche were planted on the redoubt, which had been lost nigh a month before. Sallying from Châtillon, the French

deployed in the fields, and moved towards a point about half-way on the road to Clamart, known as the quarries of Calvent. There they sought shelter under a row of vines, and commenced a rattling discharge of musketry on the Germans, who were posted behind a breastwork on the ridge of an eminence. But the alarm had been given in the enemy's camp, and reinforcements were rapidly coming to his aid. Batteries of artillery were seen raising clouds of dust as they galloped up from the country towards Sceaux and Versailles; and columns of infantry, the *pickelhaube* of Prussia and not the Baden caps on their heads, made their appearance on the heights around. The French field artillery was cantered up to the support of the infantry; but a beautifully directed shell from one of the Prussian batteries fell into one of the ammunition-waggon, blew it up, and when the smoke cleared away three of the horses were dead, the fourth with his jaw-bone carried off was kicking in agony against the traces, and the drivers were lying maimed on the ground. A second shell fell on a gun immediately behind, set on fire the

gun-carriage, and decapitated a bombardier who was riding beside. His head was carried off as clean as if the operation had been performed by the knife of the guillotine, and his fingers, stiff in death, still clutched the bridle as his horse reared in fright. Montrouge came to the rescue, and the Prussian gunners who had carried such destruction into the ranks of their French brothers-in-arms were treated to a volley of big guns, a complete broadside, by the sailors in the fort, which positively swept three of their cannon with horses and servants off the face of the soil. But the Prussian infantry advanced firmly, their numbers every moment increasing; the redoubt and village of Châtillon, dominated by the heights in the rear where the Prussian artillery was established, became untenable, and the order was given to the troops executing the reconnaissance to fall back. The retreat, which was orderly, was effected under cover of the forts, which did considerable damage to the enemy. At half-past four the combat was over. The French loss was about 200 killed and 350 wounded; the loss of the enemy must have been somewhat heavier. He left

300 corpses in Bagneux and over fifty prisoners. Clamart was defended by the Bavarians. The Moulin-à-Pierre, between it and the fort of Issy, was taken by the French with slight loss, and was held. The conduct of the troops engaged on both sides was excellent; but the results of the reconnaissance, beyond the renewed proof it gave of the solidity the young French troops were acquiring, were insignificant, and the situation remained precisely as it had been before.

Some touching incidents were related. On the road near Bagneux a Würtemberg officer was stretched, writhing in tortures from a horrid wound in the left breast. When the attendants of one of the ambulances approached to lift him on to a cacolet, he raised an unearthly shriek. A French officer passed at the moment, and the sufferer prayed him to intercede with them to let him die where he was.

"Courage, my friend," said the Frenchman. "I was wounded in the same place myself, and I'm as well as ever now;" and he tenderly took him up in his arms and helped him on to the mule.

In another place a Mobile happened on a Prussian, who was bathing his blood-stained hand in a well. The Mobile advanced on him with his bayonet, until he perceived that he was wounded. The Prussian, who was on his knees, thought he was about to be killed, and joined his palms in an imploring attitude; but the honest Mobile had not the least intention to injure him. He took him by the arm to conduct him to an ambulance. They fell into chat (the Prussian spoke a little French), and talking like old friends, they entered the lines together. The Prussian complained that he had no news from his family. "Just my case," said the Frenchman, who, in his expansion, had so far forgotten himself as to invite his prisoner to dinner! This anecdote is pretty strong evidence in itself how illogical is war. Here were two boys, made to be comrades if they only knew each other, and they had been engaged on that soft autumn morning in a desperate attempt to shorten each other's lives. Men have felt for centuries that war is a stupid brutality, and yet they make war still, and will continue to do so till the crack of doom. Can any scene be



pictured more inexpressibly mournful, for instance, than the death of that noble gentleman, Picot de Dampierre? He was in the flower of life, barely thirty-three years of age, rich and respected, full of lusty health, an ardent sportsman, and the centre of a joyous circle, whether in the Jockey Club of the city or down midst the preserves of his hospitable hunting-seat at Bligny. He lost his life under a form of government his very title precluded the idea of his favouring; but still always for France, for the fatherland. So far his end was worthy of his race; but it is shocking that such men should die before they are called away in the imperious course of nature. They are born to do good. They are brave, honourable, generous, and warm-hearted. Could they not serve better ends than to be cut down in their career while urging on their followers to the butchery of their fellow-men in the name of an abstraction? True, in this instance, the abstraction was called patriotism. The thought that his blood flowed for France was the great consolation to the many friends De Dampierre left to deplore him. His last moments were affecting to tears.

His wife, the daughter of a wealthy American named Corbin, had died three years previously.

"What happiness!" he sighed. "I shall soon see the dear angel that is gone before me;" and the brave fellow's head dropped back heavily on the bed.

A private of the 35th, named Gletty, gave a singular proof of the almost miraculous success which hardihood can sometimes compel to its side. He rushed forward and so frightened three Germans who had him covered with their rifles, that he made them lay down their arms and constitute themselves prisoners of war. That was the story, and Gletty was cited in orders. Incredible it seemed to me. These Germans must have been lily-livered soldiers, or it is possible they had tired of campaigning, and were on the look-out for some kind person to adopt them. The Mobiles of the Côte d'Or stood the test well. Captain Cracercy, of the 3rd Battalion, was the first to enter Bagneux, and took nine prisoners to his own share. Private Terreaux, of the same battalion, disarmed a colour-sergeant, captured him, and seized as trophy on the *guidon* he carried.

On the evening of the 13th, the news circulated that the château of St. Cloud was in flames. If the Prussians had set it on fire, they would have been denounced as Vandals. It was kindled by a shell from Mont Valérien. All lovers of art rejoiced that the picture by Murillo, and the statues of Sappho by Pradier, and of Night by Collet, with numerous masterpieces in tapestry and porcelain, had been brought in from the palace before the siege. There was no "Bewailing the deserted pride And wreck of sweet St. Cloud." I overheard a workman gloating over the blaze. "Thus let all these dens of royalty disappear in smoke," said this leveller, "and the people plant cabbages on their ruins." The leveller may have been a vegetarian, or perhaps he was only a market-gardener.

The 14th was the anniversary of Jena, and the French—who *will* remember that battle, and will not remember Rosbach—declared they had celebrated the victory the day before by anticipation. Those who behaved most creditably in that victory, Vinoy stated, were a battalion of former *sergents de ville*.

The policemen were old campaigners; but it was droll, nevertheless, that the "guardians of the public peace" should signalize themselves by their skill in making war.

An armistice of six hours was asked by the enemy to bury his dead, and willingly accorded. The combatants entered freely into conversation on the field where they had been pulling triggers at each other a few hours before. An Alsatian related me a dialogue he had had with a Bavarian sergeant, who struck me as being a thoughtful and not unphilosophical representative man.

"Would you not prefer to be drinking a mug of beer in the Hofbrauhaus at Munich?" asked the Frenchman.

"Would a fish prefer to be in the water?" said the Bavarian.

"Then why are you here?" pursued the Frenchman.

"For the same reason that you are—duty," answered the Bavarian.

"But why do you stop? Surely you have got all that was wanted?"

"Taken, not got, if you please," said the Bavarian. "But we have lost something—blood and money; and we must get compensation for both, with interest."

The Frenchman changed the subject, and asked his new companion what he thought of the previous day's combat.

"I think," said the Bavarian, "it was a bad combat for you. You destroyed some villages, but they were your own; you sent a shower of shells on us, but you forgot we had umbrellas to keep them off. Don't waste your ammunition, friend; you may want it yet."

On the 15th Sub-editor Schmitz's military report was almost a blank; but he managed to humour us with a story of a night surprise by some scouts of the National Guard, who killed a score of Prussians at Rucil. More cheerful and trustworthy was the intimation that Colonel Lloyd-Lindsay—he who had won the Victoria Cross by his valour at the Alma and Inkermann—had arrived from England with a donation to the International Society for Succour to the Wounded. He was thanked for the gift by the

Government, and quietly departed by Sèvres under a flag of truce, after having been arrested by some too-zealous civilians in uniform, who doth fear in every stranger Bismarck's bosom-confidant.

The remains of the Count de Dampierre were brought from Arcueil to the Madeleine about noon on Sunday, the 16th, for temporary interment. The day was brown and damp, yet the boulevards in the neighbourhood were alive with spectators. The ceremony in the church was simple and severe, but the mourning was as sincere as it was universal. There was that in the aristocrat's death that appealed to every heart, even the most republican. The flag of his battalion, draped with crape, was carried in front of the hearse, and on the coffin were laid his képi and a garland of white roses.

Monotony grew daily more irksome, yet little was done. "We" made small reconnaissances perpetually; "we" attempted surprises occasionally, and got entangled in a gin; the forts kept up a dropping bass concert outside, and there offensive action ended. "We" drilled, mounted guard, formed a queue by the butchers' stalls to catch

our daily meat, cursed Bismarck, and railed at Prussian perfidy inside, and there our defensive action ended.

Ah! that Prussian perfidy was a fertile text. What did those crafty wretches do with a large house they had turned into an outpost, and which was a lovely target for our sailors, on account of its white walls? The innocent reader would never guess. On the gunner who had taken that white house under his special care going to his piece one fine morning to have his favourite shot as an appetizer before breakfast, no house was there! Judge of the commotion. A very powerful glass was brought to bear on the spot at last, and a murky blot was made out with difficulty where the house had been. The Prussians had meanly painted it black during the night.

However, the cunning was not all on their side. There was a dry little soldier of the French Line who had in him a deal of the devilry ascribed by Fenimore Cooper to the Red Indians. He was reported to have crossed and recrossed the Prussian lines at Choisy-le-Roi, disguised as a bush. When

a Prussian patrol came in view the bush was stationary, and the strangers to the landscape made no remark; when it passed, the bush was locomotive, and moved slowly on like a monster snail.

These and like stories distracted us, but Paris was eating its way into its provisions all the same. Beefsteaks were getting fine by degrees and un-beautifully less. There was a call that Trochu should do something. The General, who was a proser, and would not lightly forfeit a chance of seeing himself in print, wrote a long letter in answer to these complaints. The substance of his letter was this: "I have my own plan, and will not be driven by public impatience to disclose it prematurely. Wait and be trustful. I had gloomy previsions when all were buoyant; now I have full confidence." As certificate that he had gloomy previsions, he stated that he had deposited his will with a notary three months before, and that in that instrument he had affirmed his presentiment of the disasters which had come to pass.

It was notified about this date that *bataillons de*



*marche* of four companies of 150 men each were to be selected from volunteers from the National Guard, and to receive pay and rations like regular soldiers. It was not contemplated to enroll more than 50,000. This pointed to a novelty in siege-history—the formation of an army of relief, so to speak, from within.

The sly introduction of some London papers into Paris has been already mentioned. *La Vérité*, a journal started after the investment, got hold of one, and published an extra edition on the 15th of October, in which it accused the Provisional Government of withholding information. This was the charge:

“Is it true that an English journal, the *Standard*, dated the 5th October, has been forwarded to M. Jules Favre, and that the contents of this journal, known to the world entire, have been hidden from Paris?”

The answer of the Provisional Government was to commit the chief editor of *La Vérité* to prison, that being how the liberty of the press was understood by a Cabinet containing five journalists—

namely, MM. Pelletan, Simon, Ferry, Picard, and Rochefort.

I must here ask the reader to be patient while I tell him a story concerning myself, from which he can draw his own moral. By the merest accident I took up the *Official Journal* of the 16th, and in the non-official portion my eyes lit on a reply to the question in the *Vérité*. Here it is in its naked truthfulness and unadorned amiability :

“The journal *La Vérité* accuses the Government of having concealed news which had reached it in a number of the *Standard*. It is perfectly correct that the Government was aware that this journal, NOTORIOUSLY HOSTILE TO FRANCE (*notoirement hostile*), contained sensational news which appeared to it to be mere invention (*absolument controuvées*). Not being able to verify (*contrôler*) this news, and considering it highly suspicious (*eminemment suspecte*) the Government was obliged to wait for further information which might arrive from one moment to another.”

In the name of common sense, thought I, if the Government could not tell whether the news was

true or false, why did it not refrain from stigmatizing it as "highly suspicious" and "mere invention"? The injustice of this phraseology was only to be paralleled by the ignorance of the expression, "notoriously hostile to France." I wrote the following letter, and took it myself to the bureau on the Quai Voltaire at six p.m. :

"MR. EDITOR—I find in the *Journal Officiel* of this morning a phrase which characterizes the *Standard* as a paper notoriously hostile to France. As sole accredited correspondent of the *Standard* in Paris at the moment, I oppose the most positive denial to this assumption. I do not know what the copy of the *Standard* which has arrived may contain, but I am sure no expression in it can bear the interpretation put upon it by the organ of the Government of Defence. As to the attitude taken by it in the struggle going on, the author of the unfounded allegation I have quoted should know that the *Standard* in England passes, rightly or wrongly, as very sympathetic to France. For the matter of that, one has only to look at the

correspondence from Bourges, extracted from its pages in the same copy of the *Officiel*, to be convinced of the absurdity of the accusation. I have neither the right nor the intention to mix myself up in family quarrels; but I cannot assent silently to a charge which is refuted in every publication of the *Standard* since the outbreak of the war.

“I have the honour, etc., etc.”

I sent up my card, and was at once received by a gentleman to whom I presented the letter, praying him to insert a rectification of an error which was calculated to be very unpleasant in its effects for a representative of the *Standard*, known as such, and residing in Paris during the siege. This gentleman read the letter, and promised that it should be submitted to the Government, without whose authority nothing could be inserted in the *Journal Officiel*. At the same time he took the liberty of informing me that the terms of the protest were “too cavalier.”

It was true. When writing it I had forgotten that that delicate pensman, M. Henri Rochefort, was a member of the Government.

"*Absurdité*," he remarked ; " why, that is the same as to say to a man in England, ' You are a foolish fellow ! ' "

" Precisely," I answered ; " and don't you think the Government was foolish to publish such a note ? "

Ultimately we agreed not to dispute about the form of the letter ; and I said I should be content if its substance were given. An appointment was made for a second meeting at ten, when I should get my answer. I came, and after waiting a few minutes, I was told, very courteously be it admitted, that my letter had been submitted to the Council at the Hôtel de Ville, with my request for its insertion, and the answer had been in the negative.

As I left, in a mood of amused indignation, this Provisional Government shaped itself to me as somewhat feeble. It could afford to make a mistake, but not to repair it. Evidently the Republic, like the king of the legal fiction, could do no wrong. But the refusal to insert my letter was grossly unfair to me, and might have been fatal. There were

numberless patriots in the quarter where I dwelt, who would experience an extreme gratification in rending from limb to limb the agent of a journal "notoriously hostile to France." What was he but a Prussian in disguise—nay, worse, a mean hypocritical spy? And I recollected with a shudder how I had heard one citizen say, that he would sooner dine off an under-done cut of a Prussian spy than stalled ox cooked by a *cordons bleu*, and washed down with Sillery. Luckily, I did not minister to that citizen's appetite. The *Temps* made the correction that the Provisional Government had not the frankness to authorize, and rebuked the "*facheuse ignorance*" of the *Official Journal*.

On the 18th of October, as a variety, I went down to the Place de la Concorde, which I had not visited since the capitulation of Strasburg. The statue of the city was still the shrine of patriotic pilgrimage, and an armed National Guardsman paced to and fro in front of it. A model in plaster, representing General Urich defending the stronghold, typified by a mother and her children, was the most conspicuous among recent votive offerings. The group

was spirited, but too palpably copied from that on the Place de Clichy, commemorating the defence of Paris by Marshal Moncey. A branch of real palm, tied round with black gauze, was laid at the base of the model, which was the gift of a company of the National Guard, counting the sculptor in its ranks. Scraps of poetry, acrostics, pledges of love and tributes of admiration, were still pasted on the four sides of the monument. One closed with the whimsical association of the cries, "*Vive la République !*" and "*Vive Uhrich, Duc de Strasbourg !*"

The *Official Journal* of this date gave a précis of what had been done for the armament of Paris. As soon as the approach of the Prussians was apprehended, orders had been given for the erection of four permanent forts in masonry at Gennevilliers, Montretout, Hautes-Bruyères, and Châtillon. Too late. Instead of masonry, earthwork was to be used; instead of forts, redoubts were to be constructed. Too late again. Only two of these, at Hautes-Bruyères and Moulin Saquet, were ready on the 18th of September, but these were in a complete state of defence. (Nothing was said of

Hautes-Bruyères having been unarmed, or of the redoubt at Châtillon having been abandoned to the enemy.) The wants in the forts detailed in Chapter I. had been all supplied, with commendable expedition in the six garrisoned by the sailors. The city gates had been closed, drawbridges made, and the four canals barred; stockades had been placed in the Seine, the military zone cleared, the woods of Vincennes and Boulogne partially razed, and the exterior of the forts had been furnished with palisades on a development of line of 61,000 metres. Batteries had been thrown up at St. Ouen, Montmartre, and the Buttes Chaumont. The ramparts had been put in effective condition; seventy vaulted bomb-proofs for powder had been built in their rear, and 2,000,000 sacks of clay laid on the parapets. The feeble angle of the enceinte at Point du Jour (jutting between the Seine at Grenelle and the Bois de Boulogne) had been protected by works in advance of the village of Billancourt, and by two interior entrenchments. The quarries that surround Paris had been looked after, and—here the military student will pause in surprise—the sewers of Bou-



logne, Billancourt, Neuilly, Clichy, and others had been converted into chambers of mines. Recollecting that the efficacy of mines lies chiefly in their sites being concealed, and that this report was sure to be known to the enemy soon, perhaps within a few hours, the surprise will be understood. To be forewarned was to be forearmed. From Issy in the south-west to Vitry, and from St. Denis in the north-east to the Canal d'Ourcq the villages had been occupied, houses loopholed, and streets barricaded; a continuous trench (which extended in chain to St. Denis) connected the redoubts of Gravelle and La Faisanderie, and another between the Seine and Marne, by Maisons Alfort, was being worked at. Thus much for the engineering department.

In the artillery there had been equal activity. The ordnance service had been wofully disorganized. Retired officers were recalled, and the *dépôt* batteries got together; the gunners of the Marines arrived, auxiliary companies were formed of old soldiers, and the sailors mustered 7,000 strong, so that the artillerists at this moment reached the respectable figure of 13,000. I confess that this

read to me as an over-statement. There were 3,000,000 kilogrammes of powder in store, and 2,140 guns in position, each of which was in condition to fire from 400 to 500 shots. Two millions of infantry cartridges were turned out each week. Most of the forts and redoubts and all the salient points of the enceinte were fully armed with ships' guns of long range ; the consequence of which was that the area of investment had been considerably enlarged. The close of the report stated that the waters of the Canal d'Ourcq had been turned into the ditch of the fortifications, that a military railway of nearly forty kilometres had been constructed ; that bridges of boats and incombustible weirs had been provided for the river ; and that redoubts were being made on the plain of Gennevilliers, and at Charlebourg, Asnières, and the bridge of Clichy. In addition, a second enceinte, with the circular railroad as its base, was progressing, and a third, "which will render the interior of the town impregnable," was in an advanced state. The catacombs were rendered impervious to Prussian treachery ; the water-supply was guaranteed ; the forts were hedged

with torpedoes exploding at foot-pressure; fifteen workshops for the repairs of arms were open; 800 percussion rifles were daily transformed into *fusils à tabatière*; and the problem of manufacturing the chassepot in Paris had been solved. Lastly, 102 mitrailleuses of various models would be ready by the 27th, on which date the delivery of 115, on the Gatling and Christophe's systems, would be begun; 50 mortars had been sent in; the founders were busy over sundry monster pieces of marine ordnance, munitions were more plentiful than at Sebastopol; and the first instalment of 300 breechloading cannon of seven centimetres and 8,000 metres range would be forthcoming in a week.

## CHAPTER VII.

The Anniversary of Leipsic—A Budget of News—A Stroll in the Zoological Gardens—A Downcast Eagle—The Gallic Cock—The Last Beef Dinner—Table-Talk—A Stop-gap Government—"Son of the Devil"—Heroes of the Rank and File—Message from the "Young Gambetta"—Rochefort's Astuteness—A Byron with a Heart of Stone—"The Star of the *Brave*?"—A Glorious Victory—Seventy-five Thousand Prussians Captured!—Toy Ambulances—Touting for Patients—The Actress and the Old Officer—The Sisters of Charity.

ON the anniversary of the battle of Leipsic, October 19th, a sort of Waterloo Day at Berlin, where it is, or used to be, celebrated by bell-ringing, gun-firing, military parading, and festive promenading under the lindens, I lay abed late, regretting I could not take a run to Versailles to see how the fête was kept there. The pessimists were expecting a bombardment on this anniversary, but the pessimists should have no heed paid to them anywhere.

They are sometimes liars or fools, always bores. Paris might not have to suffer bombardment at all. At least so opined Count de Flavigny, president of the branch of the Geneva Society at the Palais de l'Industrie, who had visited the Prussian headquarters to hand over half of the subscriptions Colonel Lloyd-Lindsay had brought with him from England, and was reported to have breakfasted with the Crown Prince, who assured him there was no intention to rain iron on "the incomparable city" (the textual expression of his Royal Highness). The Crown Prince is a benign gentleman; but he is not everybody. Behind him is a malign trio, whose counsels go for something—Bismarck, self-willed, resolute, one to put down his foot on opposition and keep it there, the Soul of the Invasion; von Moltke, modestly taciturn, but undeviating of purpose, with no more bowels of compassion than a machine, the Brain of the Invasion; and the Red Prince, Mailed Hand of the Invasion, a gruff, imperious, rough-riding soldier. Still they may not wish to bombard Paris; they may merely have the merciful design of starving it out.

As I pondered on the food question, O'Donovan entered and took his seat by the *table de nuit*, his sempiternal black pipe in his mouth.

To my usual question, "*Quid novi?*" he answered :

"Not much ; but, such as it is, important. In the first place, there is a large placard—white, therefore official—on the walls, descriptive of the siege of Vienna ; and the people gather round it, and get warlike as they read. It is headed, 'Patriotic Publications,' and is the first of a series."

"That looks like the suggestion of the Press Militant." Well, I reflected, it is one way of stimulating the defenders to martial frenzy, more civilized than Kemble's plan of shaking a ladder to put himself in a passion when he played Othello, less fatiguing than the war-dance of those savages Captain Cook met in the wanderings that led him to piecemeal burial. "What more?"

"Mottu, Mayor of the 11th Arrondissement, has been dismissed, and Arthur de Fonvielle appointed in his stead."

Bravo! This was pleasing. Mottu was a blatant admirer of liberty of conscience, a freethinker in the broadest sense. In the sublimated grandeur of his intellect he had taken down the Crucifixes in the ambulances under his control. As most of the heroes of the rank and file treated in these ambulances were simple-minded Christians, they did not appreciate Mottu's enlightenment. It must be a great triumph to him to be dismissed. He can fold his toga round him, and pride himself in the thought that he falls a martyr to the cause of liberty of conscience.

"There is a despatch from the young Gambetta," resumed O'Donovan, "bidding his colleagues be tenacious."

This despatch, which would fill one-third of a column of the *Times*, was brought in, inserted in a quill tied to a tail-feather of a carrier-pigeon. It was reproduced in reduced form by photography on a small square of paper, and had to be deciphered by the aid of a very powerful magnifying-glass.

"I have something more that will interest you. They say—I cannot understand how the news has

filtered in—that Alexander Dumas is dead. It is announced in this paper.”

Cruel irony of fate! There were two lines notifying the flight of the great romancer from the paths of men, less ado about him than about the scarcity of carrots in the market. Public calamity develops a certain egotism. Who could have foreseen a few weeks before that the death of the author of “The Three Musketeers” would be dismissed with this cold brevity?

“Get up,” said O'Donovan, “and let us take a walk to the Jardin des Plantes, and investigate what prospects it affords in the alimentary way.”

I rose, dressed, and we crossed the Seine, and religiously inspected the free zoological collection at Bercy. The elephants were getting weak on their feet, the lions were on short commons, the hippopotamus looked morose, and the black bear kept clambering his pole and dropping down again as if he had discovered perpetual motion. He begged as supplicatingly as lady's lap-dog, but very few crumbs of comfort were dropped into his pit. The thoughtless monkeys and patient camels were the



only inmates of the garden who seemed to accept this siege in the proper spirit. An affecting sight was the famous eagle from whose wing the quill had been plucked that signed the Peace of Villafranca. He was as dolesome as if he were conscious that the dynasty which had adopted him for heraldic emblem had taken its flight from the Tuileries. He was no longer the king-bird that soared and stared sunwards, but a wretched, dejected prisoner, with blinking eyes and draggled plumage; an eagle *ramolli*, such a one as might have furnished a quill to sign the capitulation of Sedan.

"Pardon me, monsieur," said one of the keepers, an acquaintance, who had watched me contemplating the drooping eagle, "I don't like to see you there so long. Come with me and I'll show you something more cheerful."

He took me into his lodge, and there, strutting on the floor, was a plump bantam, with glossy feathers and bright scarlet comb rising stiffly on his well-poised head. The cock crowed lustily as we entered.

"Birds, like dogs, have their day," said the keeper. "It is his turn now. May he trumpet victory!"

I shook my head, and said I hoped so; but in any case I hoped the siege would not last much longer, for the premonition of sixteen francs the pound for butter, seven sous each for eggs, and three sous for a bar of charcoal six inches long and no thicker than a sausage, was not agreeable.

"*Sac-à-papier!*" cried the keeper, "it is too soon to throw up the cards; when we defended Mayence under the first Republic, the General gave his staff a dish of cat garnished with mice as a treat."

That food question would not be denied. It was becoming serious. We assisted in the evening at the solemn ceremony of the last English dinner to be had, until the raising of the siege, at Austin's restaurant, opposite the arrival gate of the St. Lazare terminus. The landlord told me he would have nothing but ham henceforth, as notice had been given him at the butcher's that he could get no fresh meat, other than the rations he was entitled to for himself, his family, and servants. Anyone

who has mastered the difference between roast beef and *rosbif* will recognise what this implied. Personally, it did not distress me, for I am neither gourmand nor gourmet; but for those to whom the dinner-bell is "toesin of the soul" it was calamitous. Pitiable it was for the Christian gentleman, and eke the Hebrew, who went to Brébant's to be informed that there was neither soup nor vegetables; that the only *entrée* was a sardine, and the unique *hors d'œuvre* pickled onions—to be offered Hobson's choice of swine's flesh for *pièce de resistance*, and recommended a prime Manilla cheroot for dessert. There was a solatium: wines and tobacco were inexhaustible.

The dinner was very jolly, and discourse ran briskly on current topics.

"Guess," said an artist from Boston, U.S., "we shall soon have to eat bread like the ingenuous Dauphine, rather than starve."

"The Government," remarked the landlord, "has ordered a return of the forage in the city, I presume with a view to rationing horses like human beings."

"The authenticity of these returns will be rather doubtful," observed a cynic; "there will be more horses on the ranks in proportion than bundles of hay in the rack, or feeds of corn in the manger."

"That means much poleaxe," added the Yankee; "many a good steed will fall like Macbeth, with harness on his back. We are in for dearth."

"I was looking over a 'History of France' this morning," said O'Donovan, "and came across a passage to the effect that in the reign of Charles VII. there was a famine so dire that the wolves prowled about the forsaken streets and carried off many children."

"They are more likely to be eaten themselves now, than to get the chance of eating others," remarked the cynic.

"So Mottu has been thrown overboard?" I ventured.

There was a chorus of "Serve him right."

"Yes," joined in a half-English trader of the quarter, "Jules Simon, Garnier-Pagès, and Picard, the moderates of the Undecemvirate that misrules us, advised his dismissal; but Marshal Rochefort, of

the Barricades, and Mayor Arago wanted to keep him in."

"The advanced party is getting weaker every day," said the Bostonian; "Blanqui has been rejected as commandant of a battalion of the Nationals, by 700 to 300; and Brunnereau—he who plays Nisus to Félix Pyat's Euryalus—has been sent to civic obscurity to keep him in countenance."

"Curse the Provisional Government!" growled the cynic; "why does it keep Portalis of the *Vérité* under lock and key, and allow the rebelly Flourens to go at large? Portalis, forsooth, contravened the law against posting placards, said placards giving tidings calculated to compromise the safety of the defence. Balderdash! The placards were simply the contents-bills of the day's issue of his paper. Instead of resorting to legal quibbles, why hadn't they the manliness to attack him openly for forestalling their information? Confound your liberty-loving Republicans, say I, for a set of prating imbeciles! Trochu, the Orleanist, is worse. He has not the pluck to shoot Flourens by drum-head court-martial—a fellow guilty of armed incite-

ment to sedition in a town in actual state of war. Government indeed ! a Government of Gutter-snipe, led by Crack-brain !”

“Hush !” warned the landlord ; “there may be mouchards about still.”

But we all felt that the cynic was not far wrong. It was a stop-gap Government and no more. The conversation then turned on the “disastrous chances” which had befallen in the field, and the mode in which the fight was being carried on in the circumvallating barrier of fire. The noise of cannonading was almost incessant ; familiarity with it had bred, not contempt, but a sort of indifference ; and, to be candid, there were few events that would interest the English reader sixteen years afterwards.

It takes a vast volume of sound and a ponderous weight of metal to kill one mortal, sometimes. Personal adventure it is which has the charm for Paterfamilias, who likes to read of bloodshed over his tea and muffins. There were a few anecdotes interchanged across the table which were worth repetition. A mad officer of Freeshooters had gone

out in front of his company a few days before, and coolly cracked and drank a bottle of champagne in front of some Bavarians, who gave him a volley for every glass. Not a single bullet struck him. Somebody's children have somebody's luck; and this wild youth, it appeared, was one of the family. "Son of the devil" was the nickname he went by.

"Pshaw!" commented the cynic, "*connu!* The Corsican at the siege of Gaëta of history, Athos at the Bastion Saint Gervais of fiction."

Similar doubt could not be thrown on the other anecdote, that of Léonce Sellier, Mobile of Paris, who had been sent from the fort of Issy to the état-major only the day before to be extolled on his behaviour, and had been mentioned in the Order of the Day—the proper honour for the soldier, as General Trochu thought, and as the Duke of Ragusa had thought before him. The gallant Léonce killed two of the enemy on Sunday, and carried back their arms as *spolia opima*; but, not content with that, he adventured forth on Monday and brought in a Bavarian sentry as trophy. A corporal of Zouaves—not one of the runaways of Châtillon—also figured

in the Order of the Day. An army messenger, crossing the Seine in a boat, was fired upon by the enemy's pickets and his boat sunk by one of the islets that stud the river. As he could not swim, there he had to stop for eight-and-forty hours, until the Zouave stripped, plunged into the stream, and carried him to safety under a rattle of small-arms from the enraged vedettes on the opposite bank. The corporal, with his protégé, escaped with a whole skin. When Ducrot heard of his devotedness, he sent for him and said: "*Sergeant*, I am very proud of your conduct. Be sure we shall not lose sight of you!"

The pigeon-post from Tours on the 20th brought word of the departure of the "young Gambetta" for Besançon, hinted at demoralization in the invading army, and encouraged Paris to hold out, and the country would be saved. This did not impress Paris as satisfactory. What, asking it to guarantee the security of those from whom it was hoping for relief!

The judicial acts of the Provisional Government at this epoch must not be lost sight of; they were



instructive. Gustave Flourens was not to be prosecuted. His Excellency Count Rochefort de Luçay had prevailed on the Major to permit the Cabinet to sneak out of its difficulty by consenting to this sacrifice. And yet a trial in Paris besieged would have made him so illustrious. Truly, a tremendous sacrifice ! The pamphleteer was a useful piece of furniture in the Cabinet after all—a sort of buffer between the radical Republicanism of Belleville and the bourgeois Republicanism of the Hôtel de Ville.

To the former, angry, he winks and says :  
“ Patience, citizens ; our turn will come.”

To the latter, unquiet, he lisps : “ Confidence, messieurs ; possession is nine points of the law.”

Profound statesman, the Count !

Much on the same accommodating system, one Sapia, commandant of National Guards at Mont-rouge, who had assembled his men with cartridges in their pouches, and told them the Commune was to be proclaimed, and if Trochu did not accept it, he should be pitched out of window, was acquitted by court-martial. If Trochu were Field-Marshal the

Duke of Wellington, Sapia would have stood blindfolded before a shooting-party. A queer genius at his sanest this commandant of the National Guard—a Red Republican who wrote on note-paper embossed with a coronet to which he had no right. He had himself photographed once in the attitude of blowing out his supposititious brains; he wrote a poem to his sister, in which he described himself as “a Byron, whose heart was stone, in whose strong human breast was heard no tone.” He had enjoyed the hospitality of the Charenton madhouse. Are not the lunatic and the poet of imagination compact? The doctors said Sapia was labouring under a “diffuse maniacal delirium, attended with ideas of grandeur and suicide.” And this zany had been elected an officer, a leader of armed men!

Everybody in Paris did not approve the weakness masquerading as lenity, that let mad dogs loose to bite other dogs. Ah, this poor Government had its envenomed enemies! One of them went so far as to hatch and cast fluttering the vile fledgling rumour that the Legion of Honour was to be abolished, as to confer decorations on citizens for having done

their duty was subversive of the principle of equality. Dire was the alarm, for if any instinct is more deep-seated than another in the French organism that imagines itself Republican, it is the worship of the cocked-hat. What, defend Paris, and not have the guerdon of running a strip of scarlet ribbon in a button-hole afterwards! Preposterous. If the folly had ever been entertained, it had to be abandoned. The army, even under this régime, which inveighed as strongly against Prussian Corporalism as French Cæsarism, could as ill do without its Cross of the Legion as without the beards on the chins of its pioneers, the theatrical bearskins of its six-foot drum-majors, or the epicene garment—compromise between petticoat and trousers—of its female sutlers. The *Official Journal* allayed the rising apprehension by nominating several chevaliers in the Order. Pity the Provisionals had not the sense to go farther and make the decoration valuable, really a “star of the brave,” which it will never be whilst it is accorded indiscriminately to political partisans, backstairs minions, conscienceless scribes, notorious duellists,

successful perfumers and tuft-hunters of every degree. As the Bath, it should have its Civil Division, which might be given to novelists like Balzac, painters like Vernet, composers like Auber—aye, even to the inventor of the improved machine for cutting turnips; but there, I think, the line might judiciously be drawn.

On the 21st we were on the alert. Convoys of artillery left in the morning by the Porte Maillot on the road to Courbevoie; and later in the day Generals Trochu and Ducrot galloped by the Avenue de Neuilly in the same direction. A long line of ambulance waggons followed them; the gates were suddenly closed, and at about two o'clock a terrific cannonade commenced in the spread of country from St. Cloud to St. Denis.

As the day wore on, the most extraordinary broods of imagination hovered throughout Paris. They were all favourable to France. Some congenital idiots swore that 75,000 Prussians had been captured; the more moderate set down the prisoners at 5,000, with four guns; but all agreed that a glorious victory had been won. The report

was that the enemy had thrown a bridge across the Seine at Bezons, and passed over to the Peninsula of Gennevilliers, when the Freeshooters, say some, the *Farcy* gunboat (a devil's craft of shallow draught, carrying a fourteen-ton gun), say others, destroyed the bridge, thus isolating them from their main body. Of course, caught in this mantrap, they had to surrender, which they did with a bad grace.

Tens of thousands of people in Paris believed this cock-and-bull story. A few did not. Looking over my diary, I find the following entry made on the self-same evening: "I do not credit a word of all this. The firing is *beaucoup de bruit, peu de fruit*—'much bruit, little fruit.' At all events, Paris goes to bed happy."

When the official account came to be published, I was nearer the truth than the enthusiasts. Ducrot had made a sortie towards Rueil, Malmaison, Jonchère, and the Château of Buzanval. After an artillery fire of three-quarters of an hour, the troops advanced with vigour, driving the enemy's skirmishers before them to the protection of the breastwork on the heights of Jonchère, where the

detachment in occupation was so harassed by the French gunners that it had to be renewed five times. No details were given in this first bulletin. Simultaneously with Ducrot's movement, Vinoy made a demonstration in the south, to divert the attention of the enemy, and de Bellemare moved out of St. Denis to cover the right at Gennevilliers. And the seventy-five thousand prisoners and the four pieces of ordnance? Not a syllable of them.

Public Rumour, what a lying jade thou art!

The losses on the French side were made little of, but one deplorable circumstance came to my knowledge—some of the wounded had to remain on the field the whole night without succour.

The conviction had been growing upon me that there was mismanagement in the French arrangements for the aid of the victims of war. Here was the proof. There must have been waste of money as unquestionably there was amateur tomfoolery in this Geneva society. There was a murmur that the brawny infirmarians were not invariably ready when they were wanted, and that gossiping coteries and petty jealousies were

not unknown among the fine ladies who had turned hospital nurses because it was fashionable. It was hinted that sundry ambulances had been thinking more of how they could cut out one another, than how they could most readily minister to helpless fellows lying on the ground; that some of the wounded had been killed with unskilful kindness in private hospitals; and that others had been jolted about from one house with Red Cross ensign to another, only to be admitted at the *tenth*. Of one verity I was positive: there were too many toy ambulances in Paris, and too few serious ones, attended by persons who were earnest enough to try to know their business, industrious enough to do it, and modest enough to take duty as its own reward, and not intrigue for mention of their names in print. Some people, to my knowledge—certain hotel-keepers amongst the number—hoisted the sheltering white flag with selfish motives. They had a suspicion that those barbarians, the Prussians, might penetrate one day or other within the fortifications, and as the Prussians were notoriously addicted to pillage, violation, and massacre,

and in some instances to cannibalism, they imagined that setting up a half-dozen vacant beds in one of their half-hundred unoccupied rooms, so as to qualify for the privilege of exhibiting the sign "AMBU-LANCE," which neutralized the property underneath, would not be unprofitable. If a tenant for the ward were wanted, they had a troop of young ladies ready to use every stratagem to secure him.

"Doctor, do send us a wounded man, like a dear!" was not an unusual petition.

The doctor could not always oblige, and the gentle creatures had often to put up with a private of the Mobiles suffering from swollen feet, when they had been hoping for a cavalry colonel, pale and interesting, seamed with a scar from a Uhlan's lance. How pleased they would have been to have brought their crochet-work to his couch; to have strewn fresh flowers beside his arrowroot; to have held essence of frangipanni to his proud nostrils during that cruel dressing of his beautiful wound; to have pushed back the raven locks from his heroic brow; and to have read him softly to slumber, while an odour of poetry impregnated the



atmosphere of the darkened chamber, and the patient grew to Bayard, and the volunteer nurse to the fair damozel that tended him at Pavia.

Delightful but illusive! That was the sick-room of imagination; the sick-room of reality was nauseous with foul smells and ugly sights, and the romantic young ladies soon shrank from poultices and plasters. Of their class were those who drove about Paris elegantly dressed in sombre raiment, picking lint at their carriage-windows so as to be in evidence. But there were exceptions, noble and manifold exceptions; and foremost amongst these were the Sisters of Charity, and many of the higher order of actresses, such as Marie Favart, Clémentine Jouassin, and Madeleine Brohan. The latter acquired such an influence over a veteran officer of the Line, a weather-beaten war-dog, who was under her care in the ambulance of the Théâtre Français, that he would allow nobody else to apply his bandages. As soon as he was able to rejoin his regiment, he called for "Madeleine," thanked her for her kindness, and left her a coloured meerschäum as a keepsake. The instinct was right, if

the gift was inappropriate. It was what he prized most in the world.

The Sisters of Charity ask no panegyric, nor would they value it. They look for requital in higher regions than those of boudoir, club, or book. Even if the atheist's conception were true, and there were no higher regions beyond this weary orb, they were more than repaid in the priceless serenity of conscience.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The Truth about the Glorious Victory—Gilding 'mid the Gloom—Long-winded Favre—Prejudice against England—An Irish Original—Exodus of Foreigners—Blow-up of another Powder-mill—Félix Pyat Creates a Sensation—Farce at the British Embassy—National Guardsmen Drop Dead—An Idyl of the Battlefield—A Roman Matron—Capture of Bourget—Innovations in Dietary—A Coloured “Marauder”—Cat Soup—Were Bismarck on the Boulevards—Loss of Bourget—Surrender of Metz—Black Monday—The Writer an American Citizen.

GENERAL DUCROT's report on the affair of Friday appeared on the following Sunday, the 23rd October. The great success dwindled down to something remarkably like defeat. The reconnaissance had this result: 2 pieces of cannon lost, 2 officers and 32 men killed, 15 officers and 230 men wounded, and 11 officers and 153 men missing, which may be translated, taken prisoners.

He expressed himself satisfied!

In this wise he wrote : " The object was attained. We took the first positions of the enemy, and compelled him to bring into line considerable forces, which, having been exposed during all the action to the formidable fire of our artillery, must have sustained serious losses."

The General omitted to add that the positions had to be deserted, and that the Prussians could easily have afforded the sacrifice of a couple of hundred or a couple of thousand men, so that they secured the tenure of their works. But it might not have been safe to make this disclosure to a beleaguered garrison. The one redeeming feature of the reconnaissance was that the troops had got over the proclivity to scare that disbanded them at Châtillon.

The French had in battle-array 9,950 men and 74 guns. The two of the latter which were lost were taken by surprise. A fusillade suddenly burst on the battery from a shrubbery near the Porte Longboyau, between Buzanval and Malmaison, and killed 10 gunners, 15 horses, and the captain of the company of infantry in support.

When Trochu found occasion to issue an Order of the Day complimenting the troops on such an event, it irresistibly occurred to one that he was easily pleased. To have 440 men removed from the ranks of combatants in order to get temporary hold of ground that could be searched by the guns of Mont Valérien, and to pick up information which could and ought to have been given by a few intelligent spies, was paying too dearly for one's whistle. The only plausible excuse which could be tendered for such an adventure was the General's anxiety to test the mettle of his soldiers, and also to ascertain which of them had such aptitudes as would mark them out for command when the time came for a sortie on a large scale.

Some of those engaged had displayed a praiseworthy courage and abnegation. Captain de Montbrison, an orderly officer to Ducrot, rode constantly at the head of the columns of attack, and had himself hoisted on the park-wall of the Château of Malmaison, amid a pattering of lead, to observe the enemy. Sous-intendant Parmentier (any relative I wonder, to the Parmentier who introduced the

potato into France ?), who had distinguished himself by his attention to the wounded at Châtillon, again went under fire to the succour of his fallen countrymen, and was so zealously occupied with his errand of mercy that he was unconscious of the approach of the enemy until he was tight in their power. The Rev. M. Tailhan, who had volunteered to act as chaplain to the 7th Battalion of the Mobiles of the Seine, was wounded in the head while discharging the duties of his sacred office with "admirable devotedness," as cited in orders.

Brave old Jacquot, commandant of a battalion of Zouaves, did much to restore the compromised reputation of his once illustrious corps. In the van of the sixth company of his battalion, he turned one of the Prussian batteries, penetrated into the park by a breach in the wall, and carried the men with him in a rush, positively galvanizing them into valour by the example of his splendid audacity. On he went, bareheaded, with his *képi* on the point of his sword, and they could not but follow. When he was compelled by pressure of numbers to retrograde from a position he had pushed to, he

effected a stubborn, inch-by-inch retreat, was wounded, and, the fickle goddess again turning traitor, was made a captive.

Still, all said and done, that 21st of October impressed one as the worst day in the *fasti* of the siege so far.

While we were revolving over the probable results of this unavailing sortie, a despatch by pigeon post arrived, announcing that "we have brought back all disposable forces from Algeria." Alas! that should have been done six weeks previously. Also that "Marseilles is restored to order." That was the first intimation Paris had received that Marseilles had been out of order. When I diffidently hinted at the confabulation of the British press, before the investment, that pigeons might be employed as letter-carriers, I little imagined that the airy messengers would become such useful servitors of the commonwealth. He would be a glutton indeed who would not cheerfully sign himself *impransus* with Dr. Johnson before meditating a feast on pigeon-pie.

The *Official Journal* on this Sunday contained

a letter from Jules Favre to the Mayor of Paris on the mobilization of the National Guard for action. This, like every contribution of the eloquent lawyer to siege literature, was insufferably long-winded. Surely Hercules was not more out of place spinning wool at the feet of Omphale than this amiable orator pretending to roar in the lion's skin! In two columns he stated what might have been given in one sentence—namely, that there were 344,000 armed National Guards and 36 battalions of sappers (artificers); that about 100,000 would be needed for coming operations; that they would be furnished with all the available chassepots; that their duties (which would terminate with the siege) were to share in the defence of the zone between the ramparts and the forts and of the strategic points destined to support the movement to break the blockade. There was no lack of volunteers for this service, and foremost amongst them were the hot-headed battalions of Belleville. It may be that they were out of employment, and that those who chose to demand it were entitled to thirty sous a day.



On the 25th, a charitable dramatic and elocutionary performance was given at the Théâtre Français, "for this occasion only." The house was crammed. This was the only attempt at public entertainment since the investment, save a concert on one Sunday by Padeloup. On the 26th, a friend dropped in, partly to escape a shower, partly to console me, as I was abed ill, with the news that the *personnel* of the British Embassy was packing up for departure. This, he added, might be a sign that that bugbear bombardment was near. Britishers were not in good odour just then. *Charivari* had a cut representing the king of the forest licking the boots of the King of Prussia, and underneath it the inscription, "The German Crockett and the British Lion." My Job's comforter religiously informed me of the death of an Irishman named Delany, of the Legion of Friends of France. He, with five comrades, had volunteered on a reconnoitring party. Two of the half-dozen were killed. The sharpshooters of the enemy, seeing the group conspicuous by its difference of uniform, had given it particular attention, naturally concluding

that the strange dress indicated superior rank. Poor Delany was an original. Rallied by a companion on his folly in taking part in a quarrel not his own, he excused himself on the plea that the ruins of the monastery in which Dagobert II., son of Sigebert III. of the Merovingian dynasty, had been educated, were on his father's property in the Queen's County. The logic was Irish; his end was Irish too. He was struck as he was taking a last shot from the knee at a Bavarian *jäger*, after the "retreat" of the company had been sounded thrice. My caller, who belonged to the "Friends of France," retailed to me much gossip of his corps. The Legion had charge of a bastion near the gate of St. Ouen. There were several Englishmen and more than several Pats in the ranks. One of the latter, named George Gallaher, had the happy thought to start a canteen, with a green flag begemmed with a gilt harp fluttering over the ever-open door. The speculation failed, not because George had not got into business in an excellent hard-drinking neighbourhood; but, it appeared, the landlord had been too generous in the extension of the principle of credit

to his own countrymen. One fine day George found his stock exhausted; but that was not the worst of it—the till was exhausted too!

“How’s this, George? Canteen closed!” said the commander of the corps. “I thought this was a promising stand.”

“Faix! it was,” answered George ruefully; “too promising entirely. It’s that same that killed it.”

On the 27th we had three sensations—the departure of the foreigners, the blow-up of a powder-mill, and the launching of a startling rumour by M. Félix Pyat. They had better be dismissed *seriatim*.

Firstly, the exodus of the foreigners who thought (and sensibly) forty days’ experience quite enough of the emotions of life in a besieged city. The Americans some fifty, the Russians some twenty, and the English some hundred and fifty, left in the cold grey of the morning, getting to the gate of Charenton as the drawbridge was lowered. The head waiter at the English restaurant in the Rue d’Amsterdam gave a characteristic description of their appearance.

"The Rooshans were all swells; the Yankees turned out spiff, some on 'em a-horseback and some on 'em a-driving four-in-hands. My eye, didn't they guess and calculate as 'ow they were a-goin' to have a good time as they went along! Our people were the poorest in the lot—a great many on 'em, with their little bundles on their backs, looked as if they meant to tramp it."

The Russians and the Americans were allowed to go; but the English were told their passes had not arrived, and they should have to wait for another day. They turned back, wearied and disappointed; and many of the Americans must have wondered where the days when *Civis Britannicus sum* was a spell had taken themselves off. John Bull was not profoundly respected. At the moment England was hated by Frenchmen of all conditions whom one met. Apparently, it was despised by one German, Otto Count Bismarck von Schönhausen.

The accident in the powder-mill (the third of the kind in a month) arose from the combustion of pyroxide in the drying-room of the establishment. A captain of Engineers permitted, an unfortunate

plumber to do some soldering on the roof. Four persons were wounded, two of them mortally. The captain of Engineers was not of their number—of course not. It would have been as unreasonable to have had him blown up with the rest as to have a railway director crushed in a collision.

Lastly, but not leastly, came the rumour of Pyat, which fell upon Paris like a thunderbolt from a quiet sky. Framed theatrically in a mourning border in his paper, *Le Combat*, was the statement that Marshal Bazaine had sent a colonel to the Prussian camp to treat of the surrender of Metz, and of peace, in the name of the Emperor Napoleon III.; and that the Provisional Government knew this, and had traitorously held back the knowledge.

Terrible was the commotion when those tidings spread: there were impromptu public meetings at the corner of every street; loud were the discussions, and fierce the threats that the Faubourgs would rise and wrest authority from the provisional miscreants who were selling the holiest of causes. While the Reds were talking angrily, some National

Guardsmen rushed to the Hôtel de Ville to demand explanations, and others to the office of *Le Combat* to treat Pyat to the fate of Ravailiac. But a political brother had warned him, and he had prudently got out of the way.

The Provisional Government denied "the infamous calumny" with a lofty indignation: the latest message from Metz was dated August 27th. As for the author of "the infamous calumny," they scorned to arrest him. They would leave him to public reprobation. This was the ratiocination of the Undecemvirs. Portalis spoke the truth, and was sent to gaol; Pyat told a lie, according to their own showing, and was let go scot-free! It was evident Paris was in no mood to hear bad news; and under those circumstances, did news of the fall of Metz arrive, the Governor would imperil the defence were he to publish it.

The 28th was the sixty-fourth anniversary of the triumphal entry of Napoleon I. into Berlin. History does not always repeat itself.

Through pure curiosity, I called at the British Embassy, to ascertain what was to be done with

the would-be British emigrants whose exodus had been stopped. Their names were under the supervision of Count Bismarck.

In other words, Russians, Americans, even citizens of the Republic of Hayti, had been allowed to depart; but the children of the Empire which rules the waves must meekly await the whim of the awful Chancellor of blood and iron.

"Put down your name on that list," said an employé of the Embassy to me, "and you may get away in the second batch; that is, always provided a second batch be let go."

I had no more intention of leaving Paris than I had of voyaging to the moon; but I did not like to disoblige that amiable official, and added my autograph to his collection. Besides, I was anxious to pick up all the information I could.

The fate of France now hinged on the news of Bazaine. Metz was the key of the situation. I may be pardoned if I copy a passage from my diary of this date:

"If Metz falls, or has fallen, Paris must capitulate to famine, for the natural presumption is

that the army before Metz will push on by forced marches here to strengthen the band of investment that hems us in."

The weather was in keeping with our moral condition—gloomy and chilly. It almost depressed the human barometer to suicidal point. If more shops were closed than usual, more graves were opened. On the evening of the 27th, a National Guardsman dropped dead in the Rue de Clichy, on his return from a round of thirty-six hours' duty. The man was an honest Paterfamilias, accustomed to his glass of bitter-curaçoa before dinner, his regular meal of well-cooked victuals, his cup of coffee with the *petit verre* in it, and his game of dominoes to help digestion. Think of this staid, steady-going individual, living amid all the cosy comforts of domestic life, forced to do duty as amateur soldier, to plod through the mire to the city walls, to pace to and fro behind a breastwork, under the piercing cold before sunrise, or in the long hours of a rainy night, a harsh wind beating remorselessly on his cheeks. Then, when released from his spell on sentry, he often had no place to stretch his limbs upon



but a wad of filthy straw in a stable open to every breeze that blew, or in a bare booth with crevices between every plank. It was no wonder that the sick-list was long, and that seeds of a liberal crop of pulmonary disease were set. Nor was the misery confined to one side. Germany had its Iliad of suffering to pass through also. On the persons of some of the wounded prisoners who were brought in, and who afterwards succumbed, were discovered messages from home that would draw tears to the eyes of the least sensitive. Joseph Wachinger, a Bavarian who got his death-wound at Bagneux, and expired in the hospital of the Palais de l'Industrie, was an example. In his pocket was a letter from his sweetheart, dated Oberdingen, August 2nd, which was full of the tenderest, chastest, most heart-moving passion. The simple words of this peasant girl were more pathetic in their artlessness than anything I ever read from the pen of master-author. Art paled its ineffectual fire beside the untutored perfectness of nature.

“I hope and sigh for a happy and a gay return,

Joseph, thou, my betrothed, the one whom I have learned to love, the only one I can ever love.

“THY ANNA.”

Thus, in every syllable, was breathed an ardent affection. The poor soldier's last act in life was to kiss the well-thumbed letter, moistened with his tears. Ah, what weary waiting there must have been for that “happy and gay return” below in Oberdingen! God pity that little fluttering heart of Anna when the news was broken to her that the one “whom she had learned to love” was no more—had died in pain amongst strangers, was buried by strange hands in the distant city, in a grave over which she would never have the palliation to kneel or plant a forget-me-not! Doubtless He, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, gave the German *mädchen* strength to bear her cross, as did that noble mother of the Faubourg St. Germain, to whom message was brought as she was descending to dinner that her son, an officer of Zouaves, had been slain in the attack on Malmaison. The stately lady sank motionless as if dead. The butler

wrung his hands at sight of this fresh misfortune, and hardly knowing how to console his mistress, cried :

“Madame, madame, if he were a coward, we could have him here still !”

The colour came back to the lady's cheeks, her eyes lit with a proud light, and she rose, offering her arm to one of her guests, and ordering the butler in a clear, loud voice to dress the table with flowers till the end of the war. It was a reminiscence of Rome in its palmy days—the legend of Cornelia reproduced in the life.

On the 28th of October, General de Bellemare surprised the enemy at Bourget on the north front, three and a half miles from St. Denis, before day-break. To the Freeshooters of the Press were conceded the honours of the combat. The Prussians fell back, but thirty pieces of their artillery were brought down from Gonesse later, and ineffectually attempted to dislodge the French. Drancy, to the right of Bourget, also fell into the occupation of a portion of the garrison of St. Denis ; and orders were given to place both villages in a state of defence.

This slice of glory was certainly not bought for nothing. There must have been casualties; but de Bellemare omitted to notice them.

It was topic for conjecture how many German maidens were left to weep the absence of lovers who would never return; how many French mothers to wear mourning in dress and heart for soldier-sons. Well, war means sacrifice; there is the solace of the soldier's apothegm to fall back upon—"Omelets cannot be made without breaking eggs."

Strange to relate, in the penultimate days of this drear October, Paris was positively getting reconciled to its imprisonment and its privations, intellectual and material. The daily ration of fresh meat to which we were reduced was about *one-tenth* of a pound English; but there were few complaints. Horse was becoming as familiar in our mouths as household words. I had eaten it twice, and considered that I had accomplished a feat. Once I could not distinguish it from roast goose; the second time I was unlucky, and happened on a piece stringy as hornbeam. By a decree of the Minister of Agri-

culture on this date the price of the novel edible was regulated at eighteen sous the pound for the finer morsels, and five sous for the coarser for the week following. Not more than 1,800 animals were to be slaughtered in seven days. The wild beasts in the Jardin des Plantes were nurtured on stray dogs. The town was full of these canine outcasts; they were to be seen wandering in every street, fretting their noses against the legs of the passer-by, and looking pleadingly up in his face. But there was no compassion for man's best friend. Into the pound, and from that to the pot he went, if an owner did not start up quickly to claim him. A butcher's store for the sale of dead asses was opened in the Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie, and the lassies of the Latin Quarter could regale themselves on the quadrupeds that carried them last year at Robinson—a sort of Hampstead Heath of the environs, much affected by the student-population. A luxury was succulent buffalo-flesh, which was on sale at this period in a few favoured stalls which enjoyed a rich *clientèle*. Paris came by the flesh beloved of the hunters of the Great Divide by

sacrificing the herds in the two Zoological collections. Eggs were no longer quoted in the Halles ; fresh butter was still to be had, but with difficulty, at twenty francs the pound English ; carp, from the lake in the Bois de Boulogne, fetched from fifteen to twenty francs ; Westphalian hams were procurable at fourteen francs per lb. ; milk was sold in solidified cakes to happy millionnaires ; but vegetables were rather more plentiful than they had been, companies of "marauders" having been organized among the indigent of the city, who went out under the protection of the Mobiles to gather the green stuff still to be grubbed up in the military zone. They were paid a franc a day by the Government for their risky labour. Half-a-dozen were shot down by advanced sentries before they got wary. I met a band of these "marauders" returning from a foray on the Vincennes side one night. Among the foremost in this forlorn hope of poverty was a coloured man staggering under a bag-net of cauliflowers. I thought I had seen him before, and true enough, in scrutinizing him sharply, I identified him as a native of Martinique, a draper's assistant,

who had sold me a pair of gloves two months before in a fashionable warehouse of the Rue de la Paix. Then he was neat as Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse in the famous establishment in Oxford Street; now, what a wreck! "Poor devil" spoke from every seam in his coat; he had run completely to seed.

Another anecdote, which the squeamish may pass over, will prove the culinary shifts that were resorted to now that we were within a measurable distance of the pinch of hunger.

On the Avenue de la Grande Armée I saw a soldier skinning a cat, preparatory to making gilet soup. I heard he had hanged pussy, and told a comrade who had remonstrated with him for not bleeding her, that he knew nothing whatever about it: that cats, like hares, should not be bled. It was not his first essay in this branch of the gastronomic art; he had been a *cordons bleu* in the Crimea, and I presume he was right. One must not be too particular in a siege. A craving stomach is inexorable.

Changes in diet were not the only changes to be chronicled. The new Opera House was turned into

an army store; the dancing-gardens of Mabilie served as barracks for volunteer rifles; a National Committee of something or other (those wind-bag politicians all gave themselves grand names) held forth at the Valentino; the concert-hall of the Folies-Bergère was fitted up as an ambulance. Yet the town was not positively sad on occasion. A ray of sunshine brought out those volatile Parisians like so many summer flies. When we had a bright day, the boulevards were crowded, and the great promenade, the finest in the world—leaving the Broadways, the Corsos, the Unter-den-Lindens, the Regent, and even the Sackville streets in the background—actually wore a cheerful look. Count Bismarck, had he strolled along it, would have been surprised—perhaps shocked. He might have tolerated the painted legend “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” outside the churches; but he would have made a wry face at certain caricatures of himself and his royal master. Those sentinelled booths in front of the Madeleine, where a National Guardsman sat behind a table covered with red cloth, and received offerings (bracelets, breast-pins,



and gold rings amongst the number) to pay for the casting of cannon, might have altered his ideas of Parisian pertinacity. The announcement of a lecture, instituting a parallel between himself and Tartuffe at the Porte St. Martin, would hardly have gratified him. One of the loveliest of those autumnal days was Sunday, the 30th of October, and the elated promenaders were watching, with an almost childish pleasure, the bars of sunshine slanting from a sky streaked blue and milky-white. They forgot war for an interval, and talked gaily of Rochefort's declaration : that he, in person, would go out at the head of the next perilous sortie, and his challenge to the "poltroon," Félix Pyat, to accompany him.

During this span of old-time carelessness, desperate fighting was going on a few miles from these blithe boulevards, and Frenchmen in their youth and in their prime were gasping their last ! I heard the tale of defeat that night, but it was only next morning Paris learned that Bourget had refallen into the hands of the Prussians. This was the sum of the official report of the

catastrophe, for such it was. Masses of Prussian infantry, over 15,000 strong, with a powerful artillery in support, presented themselves before Bourget early in the morning, while other columns coming from Dugny and Blanc-Mesnil (to its left and right respectively) turned it and cut off and captured a number of men posted to the north of the village. The evacuation of Drancy was ordered, added the bulletin, which dismissed the event as of slight importance, "Bourget not forming part of our general system of defence."

Excellent, most excellent, were it not for the report signed de Bellemare, recounting the taking of Bourget, and indulging in cock-crow over the victory! Therein he boasted that the possession of the village "enlarged the circle of our occupation outside the forts, gave confidence to our soldiers, and augmented our resources in vegetables." He admitted, too, that Colonel Lavoignet had received orders to "establish himself solidly," and in a later despatch declared that the results of a combat on Saturday evening were "important." This combat was hand-to-hand between some men

of the Prussian regiment of Queen's Grenadiers, who had jumped over the walls of an orchard where they were posted and fell upon a company of Mobiles. Frankness in the Provisional Government would be safer and more politic than this too thin gloss of falsehood. The re-forfeiture of Bourget was due to gross incapacity.

The position was surprised, and the unfortunate half-battalion of Freeshooters that tried to hold it was butchered. Out of 380 men, there remained but 150. An entire company of the Mobile Guard was gobbled up before it could burn a cartridge. The couple of pieces of ordnance of small calibre that defended the position where a colonel had received orders to "establish himself solidly," fired just four shots each! The panic at Châtillon could be explained; the attack on Malmaison, though repulsed, had some compensations; but this was an inexcusable mishap, and brought the continued impotence and imprudence of French command into deplorable prominence. There was one episode which shines out like a splash of gilding on a sombre page—the death of Eugène Baroche. He

was son to a former Bonapartist Minister, a crime which did not escape the denunciation of the gentlemanly editors of the *Rappel*. They pointed him out to the indignation of his men, and demanded that he, "one of the clique," should not be entrusted with the leadership of Republicans. Some of his friends urged him to reply to his unbecoming assailants. "No," he said, "I shall answer them before the enemy!" The high-minded young soldier was shot dead in full front while leading his battalion of Paris Mobiles to the attack.\*

A messenger from the British Embassy called on me this morning, requesting me to present myself there before two in the afternoon. On my way to the deserted diplomatic palace, I saw a bill-sticker pasting up two white placards; one telling of the

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\* From news which subsequently came in from the provinces, it appeared that his father died on the very same day. There was but an interval of three hours between their respective deaths. A vista crowded with weird imaginings this coincidence opens up, if one could dare to take a glimpse behind the veil of futurity.

return of M. Thiers, and the proposal of an armistice by four great Powers, the other of the SURRENDER OF METZ.

Groups collected opposite these placards, and looked at each other blankly as they read them. The news of the fall of the Lorraine fortress, coming so quickly on that of the bloody mischance of Bourget, was too much ; Paris reeled under the shock, and the Black Monday was within an ace of becoming blacker still by a wild upheaval of the populace, stunned with the stroke of misfortune. They were dazed and crazy with the heavy succession of sledge-hammer blows that had descended upon them, and their action was most unwise, and something mean and cowardly ; but allowance should be made for them. It was a clear case of *ira furor brevis est*. They were mad. I continued on my way to the Embassy, wondering what would next turn up in the chapter of accidents. On entering, I was told that I had been sent for to sign a paper, undertaking not to carry out any letters or newspapers—nothing but personal luggage—under pain of the rigours of military law. I did not want to

go out, as I have said ; but I did not hesitate to affix my signature in order to acquaint myself with the details of the process.

“ Now, put your name to this,” said the employé.

I signed unhesitatingly again, and glanced over the document, which was in French.

This document, formally submitted to me at the Embassy of her Britannic Majesty, described the subscriber as a “ Citizen of the United States.” I was not aware of the fact that I enjoyed that privilege ; but it did not seem to avail much. As I left I was informed that I should possibly hear more of the permission to leave in course of time, that is to say, as soon as it would suit his high mightiness Count Bismarck. A nice problem for the casuists to decide, I reflected as I sauntered off, would be whether the good faith of a man who, by particular request, signed himself what he was not, would be valid guarantee in the small matter of not smuggling letters or newspapers. I gave up its solution as I might a knotty double acrostic, and began wondering what one Henry Temple, Viscount Palmerston, would have said to these queer pro-

ceedings were he alive ; but the tokens around soon recalled me from reverie to reality. There was riot in the atmosphere : Paris was in labour—and brought forth a monster.

## CHAPTER IX.

The Feast of Refractory Fools—" *Pas d'Amnistie !*"—"Down with Trochu !"—A Lull in the Storm—Sober Soldiers—A Drunken Patriot—"Down with Thiers !"—Three Gunshots—" *Sauve qui Peut*"—Re-assembling of the Mob—The Hôtel de Ville forced—The Irrepressible Street-boy—An Orgie of the Ochlocracy—"Down with Rochefort !"—Dorian declines the Presidency—"Put that Old Gentleman into his Shirt-collar"—Shame and no Blush—Major Flourens takes the Table—"Down with the Tricolour !"—The *Générale* is Beaten—Parley—The Rescue.

SOME instinct told me there would be mischief before nightfall, and I directed my steps towards the Hôtel de Ville. There was one chance that all would pass over quietly, the day was rainy; but the devil had got the ear of "evil-hearted Paris," and there *was* mischief. Before nightfall there were two Governments in the city, or rather there was no Government; the entire adult male population



was under arms; carnage in the streets was possible at any moment; and it was only late the following morning peaceful men learned to their relief that a temporary arrangement had been come to between the Provisional rulers and their would-be supplanters.

There was an *émeute*, and as I saw and assisted (in the innocuous sense) at its beginning, and afterwards collected my notes, and collated them with those of others, I may fairly claim to give an accurate and tolerably ample narrative of as grotesque a revolution as revolutionary Paris ever witnessed. As every *journée* deserves its title, this might have aptly been called "The Feast of Refractory Fools."

Never do I regret so that I am not a poet—that is, such a one as the authors of "Rejected Addresses" or "The Ingoldsby Legends," or better still, such as Mr. Archdeacon Parnel, who sang the "Battle of the Frogs and Mice;" for they only could rise to the height of the argument the monster prison, which had been the petted capital of luxury, presented on the 31st of October, 1870. They only

could celebrate the arms and the man of that Punch-and-Judy epic.

The revolution rose, culminated, and collapsed, all "in one revolving sun," within a circumscribed space, less than the area of Trafalgar Square. Its framework was the reverse of inspiring. Above there was a watery sky, beneath a spacious surface of puddle; around, except where the cold river swirled in its stony bed, were high dismal walls soaking with wet.

The Hôtel de Ville, when Prefect Haussmann was there, and the many windows flashed on the night, and there was revelry in the municipal halls, was not the melancholy Hôtel de Ville of this year of disgrace for France. It was now a bilious, solemn monument. When I reached the Place which the bare-headed Louis Quatorze on horse-back contemplates (conjure up that idea, a bas-relief of the Grand Monarque, he, ruler by Right Divine, under an inscription, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"), the only manifestation was that of a forest of umbrellas. Jupiter Pluvius was drenching the Republicans whom his Olympian friend,

Louis, looked down upon with contempt. Anon the shower, which had been too violent to last, ceased, and the umbrellas were folded. The throngs on the Place grew denser, and the rub-a-dub of a drum—now become odious from its frequency—was heard. It heralded a company of the National Guard unarmed, coming to make one of those wanton demonstrations that wilful Paris delights in like school-boy. I moved out from the café on the rue de Rivoli where I had screened myself from the rain, and imprudently adventured into the thick of the crowd. Such a crowd! It was close, big, heated now—heated morally and literally—and there were many women, brown-faced, bare-armed viragoes with muscles in their arms, and masculine tongue, and fierce diabolic expression. Most of the men were in uniform, or had some prompting of uniform, if only a cap with a red band; and all were excited beyond the bounds of the small reason they ordinarily possessed. Such faces! Faces flushed, glowing, burning with infuriate passion. Every unit in the mass was speaking simultaneously, for this was the self-styled “people of Paris,” the restless uncon-

trollable plebs that sends a periodical shock through Europe, when it rises and lashes itself to rage; and your Parisian proletaire is a born orator, and is enamoured of the music of his own voice. Methought there were proletaires, carpers, and demagogues there of all centuries, and of every land. Thersites and Ciceroacchio were to be seen, Jack Cade and Simon the Cobbler; that atomy, pale and angular, perorating on his toe-tips, was Alton Locke, the Chartist tailor, and the swarthy blackguard he was buttonholing was a Levantine rough; while those famous cads, Magog Wrath and Bully Bluck, hung on the fringe of the group, and a Plug-Ugly from New York apostrophized a truculent loafer from the lower town of Brussels. As the hurricane of hysteric gab heightened, the pavement in front of the Parisian Mansion House, which was held by a scant line of Breton Mobiles in grey capote, was gradually encroached upon, and those who kept their heads cool guessed what was coming. By-and-by there would be a push-back of the throng, and then a shout of "Up with the barricades!" or a torrent rush into the building. The Provisional Govern-

ment was sitting within, and a mob in the Hôtel de Ville might forebode anarchy, mayhap murder to-day, and the drawbridges let down to the Prussians to-morrow. I tried to catch the drift of the speeches that were being blurted out on every side. It was hard to detect any coherence in them, but their drift was plain. Hate, blind hate and wrath against somebody—not anybody in particular. As the unresisting Provisional Government represented power for the nonce, it served the purpose, and the people of Paris thumped it as a prize-fighter in training for more serious work might thump a sack. The blunder at Bourget was the theme of discourse at one of the most reasonable of these flagstone parliaments.

“Three thousand men against five-and-twenty thousand,” cried one citizen. “That’s the story since the start. ’Tis the same under the Republic as under the Empire. Our leaders are imbeciles.”

“We are sold to the enemy!” shouted a second.

“Down with Trochu!” yelled a third.

“Ha!” hissed a fourth; “this, then, is his famous plan that he’ll tell to nobody—to starve us out, and

open the gates to the Prussians to bring in the monarchy on their bayonets."

"He's an Orleanist," was raised in a chorus, "and we are his dupes."

I edged towards another knot of what Brougham happily nicknamed the "Great Unwashed." Here the text was the mission of Thiers. A burly fellow was giving hoarse vent to his ardent desire to have the historian in his clutch, and he'd tear him asunder—yah! that he would, for a little good-for-nothing, who had been travelling like a mendicant friar to all the courts of Europe, cadging crumbs from their tables.

"*Pas d'amnistie!*" screamed an Amazon, her frame swaying with terrible excitement.

She had confounded amnesty with armistice—the armistice which Thiers was supposed to have been entrusted with the task of bringing about. So did most of her congeners. They did not know what one signified or the other. I felt inclined to tell this Amazon it was not manners to refuse a gift before it was offered, but I looked at her biceps and changed my mind.

"*Pas d'amnistie! des armes, des armes!*" shouted a tipsy National Guardsman, as I neared a third group, which was debating the propriety of naming a deputation to ask Trochu what excuse Bazaine had to give for his capitulation! Why didn't he cut his way through the Prussians? This was but a repetition of the shame of Sedan! And so on through a series of the like unreasoning ejaculations.

Childish and ludicrous the chatter and antics would have been, were they not shot with the blood-vein of desperation. To one who was a true French patriot, this spectacle of Bedlam let loose with contingents from Pandemonium must have been agony supreme.

The rain began pattering anew, and I hurried to an open porch, where three soldiers of the 42nd had taken refuge. One of them was very white; his head was tied round with a bandage. I asked him had he been wounded, and with difficulty the poor youth explained that he had got a bullet above the left jaw at Chevilly, which had passed out at the other side of his face after having torn away a

portion of his teeth and gums. A second had his right arm in a sling; the sleeve of his great-coat was ripped by a piece of lead which had abraded the forearm to the elbow, and paralysed the nerves. The wound was not serious, he said, but it stung him; and a contraction of his features at the moment lent conviction to his words. The third, who was the weakest, blushed that he had no wound to show; he had to be carried back from the outposts because he was not strong enough to bear the bad food, the cold, the want of rest, and the discomforts of the bivouac.

"Let us make a sortie *en masse*," hiccuped a citizen in uniform, staggering out of a wine-shop as the shower cleared off. "Down with Trochu! Live the Commune!"

The three feeble soldiers smiled, bowed to me, and returned silently to their ambulance. They had no right to call out for the deposition of Trochu; they had only done their duty and suffered for the country; they were not patented patriots.

The rabble which had sought shelter from the



rain poured back and gathered round the few unflinching demagogues who had stood their ground, reckless of moisture, and the great quadrangle was shortly black with seething, surging humanity, that must have looked to the watcher from an attic like the colony of insects revealed under a stone upturned. Louder rose the tumult, and angrier the voices, until a universal howl of "Live the Commune!" was raised as the bugles and drums of a column of National Guards—this time armed, to the very *vivandière*, who swung a carbine—broke in on the tempest of throats with a diversity of sound.

It was now about half-past one o'clock.

This battalion was welcomed with cheers, and the men held the butts of their rifles upwards in token of amity to their "friends and brothers." Something grave was going on in the Hôtel de Ville. A man of gigantic height, who could see over those surrounding him, informed his neighbours that the Mayor of Paris had attempted a harangue from a chair, and was refused a hearing. Several others followed with no better success. A fellow

in a blouse hoisted himself on the railings in front of the building, and held forth a paper on which these phrases were written: "No armistice. Live the Republic! Resistance to the death!" A bellow of satisfaction greeted them, and cries of "Down with Thiers!" were renewed, with cries superadded of "Down with the renegade!" Those foremost in the turbulent assembly at this point managed to penetrate into the courtyard. General Trochu and Jules Simon endeavoured to calm them, made asseverations of their devotedness to the interests of the defence, and appealed for union. They were not hearkened to, and at length they withdrew.

This was about half-past two o'clock.

Suddenly a report rang out; it struck me as the discharge of a blank cartridge in the air; another and another followed, and quick as thought the mob, which had been clamouring for a sortie *en masse*, turned and fled in the wildest confusion. It was a complete *sauve qui peut*. Heads were ducked as if to evade the expected volley; and here and there an unlucky citizen fell sprawling at

full length in the mud, and was trampled upon or tripped over by companions behind. I was swept along with the tide, and only owed my escape to the nimbleness of my feet. There were moans and shrieks. Many unfortunates stumbled or were borne down and trodden to jelly. There is nothing so selfish or savage as panic. As well might one have tried to stem a herd of charging buffaloes as that scared scurrying multitude. Incontinently I was carried forward at racing speed, and was unable to disengage myself from the rush until I reached the adjacent quay. As I rested panting against the parapet that borders the Seine, I could see runaways already at the other side of the Pont St. Michel, and hear the echoing yell, "To arms, to arms!" The shutters of the shops on the line of quays were run up forthwith; the alarm was general, and the roll of drums could be caught in the distance. There is a current of animal electricity in a crowd that affects those in contact with it, and it took me all my power of self-command to refrain from joining in this insane yell, "To arms." When I recovered breath and composure, and asked

myself "Wherefore to arms?" I laughed bitterly. Some of those panic-stricken patriots, I afterwards learned, had never stopped till they reached the Place St. Sulpice, a mile off; there they spread the lie that Trochu had attempted a *coup d'état*, and that the Bretons were slaughtering the sovereign people of Paris.

Who fired those shots? Were they fired from the mob, or from the Hôtel de Ville? It was never ascertained. One version had it that they were fired by the Mobiles on the patriots; another, that they were fired by a patriot towards a window where members of the Government had shown themselves. The latter was the more likely. One thing was positive—they were fired with intent: an accident might have explained a single shot, not three.

The same impulse of electricity that brought the mob to the space before the Hôtel de Ville, that stirred it to turmoil, and that sent it scampering away wholesale, brought it back again by degrees. Yielding to the force of association, I, too, found myself in the quadrangle as the reassembled crowd

pressed against the main entrance. Imperious knocks were hailed on the large doorway which was closed. It was a critical moment. The suspense was thrilling. Again rat-tat-too was hammered on the hard wood. The portals flew back. And a line of flame with a crest of smoke burst forth with a crash? Nothing of the kind. The crowd entered precipitately, meeting no resistance whatever. The Mobiles were moved tranquilly to one side and left the passage free. The pair of winding staircases were covered by the roaring tide springing up like a resilient cataract, if such there could be, and presently a dirty-faced urchin was to be seen leaning saucily out of one of the central windows of the municipal palace, a cigarette between his lips. Boute-en-train was triumphant; beneath him Paris "heaved her noisy seas." The seat of Government was in the hands of the sovereign people. I followed the crowd, was carried with the living wave rather, and was landed in a spacious room on the first-floor packed with brawlers. The noise was deafening. It was impossible to divine what was being done; the sole

fact clear to my benevolent neutral comprehension was that the upholstery was sorely victimized. Every now and again some honourable gentleman left the impress of his hob-nails on the crimson velvet cushion of a chair, or broke through one of its offensive gilt arms, in emphasis of some figure of speech. It was an orgie of the ochlocracy. I was subsequently assured, and I believe it, that half-a-dozen governments were holding synchronous sittings in different rooms, sometimes two of them in the same room, and were launching decrees in an excruciating parody of official jargon, but with a most admirable uniformity of adherence to the phonetic system of orthography. I read some of those decrees and had some lists of those governments; but as the former were never enforced, and the latter were not even ephemeral, I consign them to forgetfulness. But the Provisional Government, where was it? We were in the Throne Room; and a cry of "Rocheport, Rocheport!" was raised, but no hats were lifted. Amid shouts of "Live Rocheport!" and "Down with Rocheport!" pretty evenly divided, he, who had been the storm-

petrel of Imperialism, was moved to the table. The Count was on his legs. How pale he was, and tremulous, and oh! how ugly. I agree with Madame de Sévigné, that we men have the privilege of being ugly; but Henri, Count Rochefort de Luçay, surely abused the privilege. Hush! He speaks in that lisping irresolute voice of his:

“Citizens, the Government of Defence, now assembled, is deliberating on the question of the nomination of——”

“No deliberations!” “Down with Rochefort!” “Go to Chaillot, [as a Cockney would say Putney] Sir Count!” Such were the calls from these mad wags.

Unhappy Tribune, ungrateful people! It was cruel to be scourged with his own rod, vulgar sarcasm, by the spoiled child to humour whom he had so often turned his back on delicacy. He essayed to make himself heard, but was driven from the table with the swashing blow, the pitiless facer, that he was an aristocrat.

To Rochefort succeeded an orator who proposed that M. Dorian should be President of a new

Government. This proposition was accepted, though there were Irreconcilables who objected that no President was wanted. Sundry of the lists of the new Governments were flung from the open windows to the hungry outsiders. In the Salon of the Government, to the right of this room, the Cabinet was seated all this time in the midst of a perspiring mob of patriots. When the rabble from the Throne Room invaded this chamber, and declared that M. Dorian had been named President, M. Dorian, a plain man, got on the table and declined the honour. He knew nothing of the art of governing; he was a cannon-founder, and he begged of them to leave him to his cannon. Discreet M. Dorian! Three of the sovereign people mounted the table which began to be shaky, among others the patriot, Vermorel. He was hooted down to the tune of "Be off, police-spy! We know you!" From the caldron of hubbub, the venerable figure of Garnier-Pagès arose like the Neptune of the storm in the Tyrrhene Sea, with his grey hair brushed back and streaming over his shoulders, and his neck imprisoned in the high Vaternörder



shirt-collar which was the fashion in the reign of Charles X. He began :

“I have witnessed three glorious revolutions——”

“Shut up!” was the cry from every side, while the shrill voice of a boy perched on a candelabrum—the same young scamp who had been puffing the cigarette at the window a while before—was heard requesting that that nice old gentleman should be put back into his shirt-collar. The venerable witness of three glorious revolutions absolutely swooned under his reception.

Jules Ferry got up and tried to appease the auditory ; but even his imposing presence failed to exercise any influence on the unappreciative rabble. The aged General Tamisier, commander of the National Guard, was helped to the table, but recoiled under the rebuff levelled at him by some patriot in whom the bump of veneration was not developed. The attitude of Trochu and Favre was noble ; both were calm. A sardonic smile played round the soldier’s mouth ; the advocate’s face was darkened with a veil of sorrowfulness. The Roman senators were not subjected to fouler

indignity by Brennus and his victorious Gauls, nor were the Roman senators more dignified. One ruffian actually flourished his clenched hand close to the Governor ; another spat on Jules Favre, who quietly wiped the saliva away and told his insulter he never surrendered to violence. This, honest men will think, was the most beautiful page in the lives of those two men, prouder than any triumph of the field or forum.

Had a certain undersized Corsican artillery officer been in the position of the Breton, what might not have occurred ? We are justified in the belief that it would have been another 13th Vendémiaire : the gutters would have run red with blood. Perhaps it would have been better so. A few rounds of canister in October, 1870, might have averted the massacres of May, 1871.

There was an abrupt change in the drama. A new element of sensation was thrown in, as if we had not already had a surfeit. There was a note of preparation at the door, as when three chords are struck by the orchestra in the playhouse ; and bounded on the scene, like the leading lady in a

*corps de ballet*, the renowned and redoubtable Gustave Flourens. The Feast of Fools had found its Lord of Misrule! The Major looked killing. He was got up in the costume of a cavalry officer, with patent-leather boots, such as Franconi wore, on his thin legs, and a scimitar dangling by his side. What a buccaneering apparition, to be sure! Jewish visage with eyes like blazing coals, and a bronze-hued beard flaming meteorically at either side. He jumped on that unfortunate table and addressed the crowd in his quick decided tones, telling them that a Committee of Public Safety (his own name first on the list) had been formed by five thousand citizens in the Place below, that the elections for the Commune should be held under their direction within twenty-four hours, and that Commissioners should be sent to the forts to provide against treason. Five thousand citizens. Humph! And they were to impose their will on all France. And this was done under the invocation of liberty.

“O liberty, liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name!”

Major Flourens gesticulated like a Jumping-Jack

on a string, and gyrated like an acrobat on a spinning globe; but even he was treated to an odd pleasantry. The revolutionists of 1870 were not in the mood serious. Finally, he notified to the members of the Provisional Government that he was prepared to receive their resignations!

"Never!" said Jules Ferry; "we will only render up our powers to the people regularly consulted by us."

"To the entire people of Paris," added Jules Favre, "and not to a riotous faction."

At this instant the folds of a flag of the National Guard were seen over the heads of the assembly.

"Down with the tricolour!" was cried. "Give us the red flag of Socialism!"

Flourens was not Lamartine. His response was: "Keep this flag till further orders."

The tempest was rapidly swelling to a tornado. "Resignation or arrest" were the only words that could be distinguished over the dissonant whirlwind. Flourens, who played Spirit of the Storm, soothed the disturbers by pledging himself to the safe custodianship of the recalcitrant Government,

and invited his friends to evacuate the room, so that terms might be settled more familiarly. In the antechamber were the battalions of Belleville and a body of carbineers of the true red Republican stamp, commanded by the Italian conspirator and ex-penal convict, Tibaldi. Nobody was let out without a permit from the ancient proscrip, Blanqui, who had installed himself king of the castle; but that was easily got in the flurry of his novel accession to power.

While this atrocious burlesque was being enacted at the Hôtel de Ville, one member of the Government, who had the good luck to slip out unobserved at the beginning of the commotion, M. Ernest Picard, was not idle. He sent word of what had happened to the Admirals on the ramparts and the friends of order generally, and organized the rescue of his colleagues. The *générale* was beaten, and battalions of the loyal National Guard, hastily rallying, were posted in all the public offices. Blanqui sent round his emissaries, but Picard had been before him. They were almost invariably arrested where they came to arrest. The 106th battalion of the

National Guard, intercepted on its return from duty, succeeded in working its way into the Hôtel de Ville; and about eight o'clock General Trochu, Mayor Arago, and Jules Ferry were spirited out under its wing, caps of the National Guard having been placed on their heads, and a friendly group having environed them.

The policy of General Trochu, after all the vexations and worse to which he had been compelled to submit, did him credit. Instead of shooting down these fanatics, as now he could have done, the regular troops being at his beck, he resolved to tire them out; he did not requisition the army, but brought a host of upwards of 50,000 citizen-soldiers in front of the Hôtel de Ville, and overawed the malcontents, who were revelling in their brief vision of authority. Shortly after midnight Jules Ferry, in the van of some resolute battalions, summoned the insurgents to give in, but was answered with two shots. Happily no one was hit; the desire to avoid bloodshed was paramount, and Citizen Delescluze almost immediately appeared on behalf of the rabble in possession, to parley for a capitulation.

The terms Ferry offered were, that they should be allowed to come out to the cry of "Live the Republic!" but with General Tamisier at their head. Two hours passed, and Citizen Delescluze did not reappear; when Ferry, losing patience, forced his way into the building. Before he had entered, however, the Breton Mobiles had started up as if by magic in the midst of the astonished Bellevillites, emerging by the underground passage from the Napoleon Barracks, and the revolution, late so audacious, was disarmed.

By three o'clock, the last of those who had sat in mock-state for a few hours were mercifully let slink to their kennels like whipped hounds; the Provisional Government was released in its entirety, and General Trochu passed a moonlight review of the friends of order on the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, and was able to congratulate them that there was no Fee-faw-fum dish at the Feast of Refractory Fools.

Good, but the defence was compromised nevertheless. The bourgeoisie, unless its temper changed by whim unforeseen, would accept any not too exacting conditions with the enemy, before it would

incur the risk of another day like this, loomed over by the ominous shadow of the Red Spectre.

It is to be feared that the apologists of those who sought to upset the Provisional Government could not even urge on behalf of their clients that they were actuated by the perverted avarice of praise. It is error to believe that the demand of the Commune was one for parochial self-government. As accepted in Belleville it meant the revolutionary Commune of Paris of 1793, which attributed to itself plenary powers to govern France, which decreed victory and invented the guillotine—in other words, the Terror. Take Great Britain as an illustration. A Commune, such as Belleville asked, would be the fleet controlled, the army generalised, and the finances administered by the vestry of Marylebone.

The scorpion girdled by fire seeks to poison itself by the sting of its own tail. That is exactly the experiment Paris had been trying on this day of degradation.



## CHAPTER X.

Electoral Vagaries—Rejection of the Armistice—Mobilization of the National Guard—The Hegira of the English—A Cleric Scores off the Invader—"The Friends of France"—Paddy McDermott—The Unhappy Mr. Meeks—Companionship of Books—Surly Hunger—Under Surveillance—The Writer is made a Brigadier—The Virtue of a Silver Stripe and a Red Armlet—German Prisoners in Paris—A *Lied* in the Roquette.

HOLLANTIDE morn many a Parisian must have parted his eyelids in the frame of Murger, inclined to ask : "Under what form of Government are we living to-day?" As I had not retired to rest until 5 a.m., I did not wake till the afternoon, thereby netting the advantage of sleeping off one meal. I lost nothing by my truant vagrancy in the realms of Somnus. There had been no fighting : there seemed to have been a temporary truce by tacit consent. A proclamation from the Mairie had been

put up, convoking elections for a Municipality within twenty-four hours, only to be recalled by a later notice from the Government, adjourning the event on account of the "moral and material impossibility of holding them so soon."

The temperature suddenly lowered on the 2nd, the "Day of the Dead," which was unpleasant, considering the high price of charcoal. Less attention than usual was paid to the mournful anniversary. The truth is, we had been having a plethora of days of the dead. The *Official Journal* came out with a decree stripping of their commissions Flourens and seven other battalion-commandants of the National Guard, and warning the train-bands that they would be disembodied and disarmed if they assembled in future without necessity and regular summons, and that those who called them together illegally would be tried by court-martial. Finally, at long last, the Government submitted itself to the test of election, and Rochefort sent in his resignation. All things considered, it was not an utterly joyless day of the dead.

The voting passed off on the 3rd with undis-

turbed tranquillity in the midst of bitingly cold weather. The question submitted to the electors was—Did they retain confidence in the Government of National Defence? To speak truly, the less frantic of the faction who had acted so unwisely on Monday began to realize the danger of changing horses while crossing a ford. The verdict of the ballot-box was so sure to be in favour of the provisional power, that it must be looked upon as an encouragement rather than an approval of its conduct.

Several battalions of the National Guard were drawn up in front of the Hôtel de Ville as early as seven in the evening; and a large crowd, momentarily increasing, assembled in expectation of hearing a public announcement of the result of the day's voting, so far as known. A scaffolding had been erected in front, and about ten o'clock twelve Mobiles and twelve National Guards emerged bearing torches, and flanked this scaffolding, upon which M. Etienne Arago mounted with a paper in his hand. This, under the austere Republic, savoured slightly of the theatrical. M. Etienne

Arago would apparently play the part of Pepin l'Heristal, if he dared, and be Mayor of the Palace as well as Mayor of the city. He made a speech, which I suppress; but its essential point was that the "Ayes" had it. Here is the first list:

Aye	...	...	...	...	...	275,244
No	...	...	...	...	...	19,383
Majority for order ...						<u>255,861</u>

The garrison and the refugees from the suburbs took part in the voting as well as the Parisians. A cry of "*Vive la République!*" rent the night-air when the news was proclaimed, and the battalions, with one accord, moved off to the Louvre to offer the Government their felicitations.

Trochu came out and spoke. His address was an improvement on his usual style of sermonizing: it was pithy and soldierly, as if it were made by Lazare Hoche, whose sword was the longest and whose word the briefest of any man in the armies of the Republic.

His last sentence was: "The Republic alone can

save us, citizens ; if we imperil its existence, our own is imperilled with it."

Jules Favre opened his mouth after Trochu, and asseverated that the Government would rest faithful to its engagement not to surrender "an inch of our territory." And the corollary about a stone of our fortresses? Not a word of that.

General Tamisier sent in his resignation to-day as Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, and was replaced by Clément Thomas, a veteran sub-officer of cavalry and former representative of the people, who had been made a General without the usual apprenticeship of grades.

On Gunpowder Day, the elections of mayors for the twenty arrondissements were proceeded with in a sedate orderly manner. Only thirteen of the score secured the legal majority, and amongst these were three of the sympathizers with the flash-in-the-pan revolt of the 31st ult., to wit: Bonvalet, Mottu, and Clemenceau. Nigh a score of the malcontent faction, the nucleus of the Commune, were clapped into gaol, and among these were

Pyat, Mottu the Materialist and Mayor, Millière, Vermorel, and Ranvier. When the second scrutiny in the undecided municipal contests took place, Ranvier, the incarcerated, was elected Mayor of the 20th Arrondissement.

On the 6th, the Government of necessity received the sanction of legality. At eleven the votes were publicly declared to be (less those of the garrison and a few of the suburban communes), Ayes, 321,373 ; Noes, 53,585 ; so that order was triumphant by a majority of over a quarter of a million of voices. This was a sop to the Government for the disappointment in some of the municipal elections ; and also for that greater disappointment, the rejection of the armistice by the adamant Bismarck. He would not hear of Paris being revictualled, or of Alsace and Lorraine joining in the election of a National Assembly. He was not clement, but he felt warranted in the hardness of his conditions ; and, from the Prussian standpoint, he was patriotic to insist upon them. On this date, too, was published a decree dividing the forces of the defence into three armies. The First, composed of the

sedentary National Guard, was to look after internal order and to man the enceinte, which was split up into ten *secteurs*; the Second, under Ducrot, consisting of the Line, the Régiments de Marche, and the Mobiles, was for field service outside; and the Third, made up of the sailors, marines, *douaniers*, and the like, with more Mobiles and Régiments de Marche and the active National Guard, was to garrison the forts. These war contingents of the train-bands were organized in battalions of four companies of 100 or 125 each, according to the strength of the sedentary corps from which they came, and were filled up—first from volunteers; next, from bachelors, or widowers without children, between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age; the same between thirty-five and forty-five; and lastly, from the married men under thirty-five, and thence up to forty-five at need. They were armed with the chassepot, which was to be yielded by their comrades of the non-active roll. This set us thinking that stern work was nigh.

The Hegira of the English took place on the 8th of November. I did not assist at the event, as I

was in bed at the time with a combined attack of rheumatism and low fever diversified by heart spasms and neuralgia in the gums. I had every opportunity of cultivating Mark-Tapleyism. I amused myself reading the account of Orlando Furioso's departure from Paris when it was besieged by the famous son of the King of Troy, and of his pilgrimage

"in ver l'arena bianca,  
Onde Inghilterra si nomò Albione,"

in the pages of Ariosto, instead of imitating it in the flesh. O'Donovan entered and told me the "Britishers had gone." He half-wished he had gone with them; the Prussian Ramadan was getting just a little too long and too trying. To my query why he had not accompanied them, he answered:

"For the same reason a cripple does not dance the bolero—couldn't. Had neither coin nor safe-conduct. Besides, I wish to see this out to the bitter end."

All the English did not leave; some clung to Paris still, even in the extreme hour when her



motto was not *Fluctuat nec mergitur*, but *Nix mangiare*. They were not among those who should have remained, those who filled their coffers and drained the goblet of pleasure here when this was Sybaris. Those creatures had "skedaddled" at the first blast of alarm. Frenchmen should not forget the little phalanx that stood in the day of distress by their side. Since Homer enumerated the ships in the Achaian fleet, O'Donovan suggested that I should classify them for the benefit of an admiring posterity. Much trouble in that task was obviated, for they were classified already. First, there was the Irish College in the Rue des Irlandais, close by the Panthéon. There were some fifty fresh-faced lads from the Emerald Isle in this establishment, which is a Roman Catholic ecclesiastical seminary, superintended by Vincentian friars. The priests turned the institution into an ambulance, and an airy, admirably managed one it was, where wounded soldiers were nursed into the happy error that a bullet in the knee was a benediction. Trochu visited it, and expressed himself highly pleased. It was in the Irish College I heard an anecdote which

is worth repeating, although it may not be authentic. In the advance to Paris, after Sedan, a Prussian officer met a young man in a field, whom he took by his garment to be a Catholic clergyman. Ecclesiastics on the Continent, as all may not be aware, have a distinctive dress. That in France is a black cassock, and a round-topped broad-leaved beaver hat.

“Ha!” said the Prussian pandour, laying his hand on the hilt of his sword at the sight of the young Frenchman, “I’ve been wishing this long time to kill a Catholic priest, and now that I’ve got the chance——”

“Pardon, monsieur, you’re out of luck this once,” smilingly interrupted the student (for such he was); “I am only a sub-deacon!”

The worthy Hibernians have a cosy country-house at Arceuil, but that was not an agreeable residence at the moment, as French and German shells held frequent rendezvous in the garden, and sometimes knocked against each other or playfully bowled over huge green urns of cactus as if they were nine-pins. There is an English street, as well as an Irish, on the Left Bank, not far from

the Morgue; but there was not a single breath of Britishism about it—not even a solitary pane of glass with the notice on it, in gilt script, “One speaks Englisch” (*sic*). After the Irish College, the next largest body of English-speaking folk was on the bastion by the Gate of St. Ouen, which was guarded by the “Friends of France.” There were some thirty Britishers in the first company of this corps; the members of which, off duty, might often be seen promenading on the Boulevard des Italiens, their converted Enfields slung martially over their right shoulders. A young Englishman named Drake was among the first of them to lose the number of his mess. He was wounded, and, in the ambulance where he had been sent for recovery, caught small-pox and died. The greatest character of the Legion—always after the Belgian journalist with the Irish name, that atrocious punster, Flor O’Squarr—was Paddy McDermott. Paddy was a good-natured Republican of the Belleville brand; he admired “Rushforth,” as he called him, but he had one great antipathy—Victor Hugo.

“How do you explain that, Paddy?” I asked once.

"The ould fool," was the answer ; " what does he mane be makin' the headsman at the Tower of London, in *Marie Tudor*, a man ov me name ?"

Paddy's definition of " Liberty, equality, and fraternity " must be recorded. " Liberty," he said, was the privilege of taking a drink when you liked, and knocking down the ruffian that demanded payment ; " equality " he interpreted as one man being as good as another, and " a dale betther ;" while " fraternity " he simplified thus—" What is yours is mine, what is mine is my own." The Provisional Government, he presumed, was ironically so denominated because of the scarcity of provisions. Three of the Legion, amongst them Chalmers, an Englishman, had been already mentioned in orders for their gallantry at Bourget, where they covered the retreat from a tallow factory. Some of the English banking-houses, notably Blount's, in the Rue de la Paix, still kept open their doors, choosing the brave part of staying to share the privations of the city where their immediate sphere of business lay. In the few Protestant houses of worship open, the minister was pretty nearly reduced to the condition of Dean Swift when he addressed

his congregation as "Dearly beloved Roger." The English Passionist church, in what had been the Avenue of Queen Hortense, had been converted into an ambulance. Most of the nurserymaids, tailors, and couriers had fled long since. A few of the "Oxford graduates," who teach English in twenty-four lessons (London accent guaranteed), still hung on, with an odd member of the corporation of coachees, who might have been observed exercising the 'osses on the "Chawmps-Eliza," and a few of the unemployed printers of *Galignani's Messenger*. Sundry artists haunted the modern metropolis of art, amongst them Nicholas Walsh.\* There was a detachment of those Mother Carey's chickens, the Special Correspondents; but that should not count. They are everywhere, like base coin and bad luck. There were some Englishmen amongst us whose absence would have been preferred. One of these, the brave Sir Swelling Beardley, who wore several orders on his breast, was enjoying the hospitality of the State at Mazas.

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\* Mentioned in my former book.

There must have been others in this deserted English colony, but they did not come within my ken. I was strolling on the Quay of Bercy one day, when my attention was arrested by the strains of the "Slave Ship," sung in a style to recall Henry Russell. I turned into the open door from which the sounds came. I had found another Englishman, John Meeks, of the London Fire Brigade.

"Me and my mate, Bob Page," he said, "came across with seven of Merryweather's steam fire-engines the day before Paris was invested. We were precious near being chawed up, I can tell ye, sir."

For all his loud singing, John Meeks was unhappy. His lament was that there were not enough fires at Paris. I counselled him to patience, as he might shortly be left without that grievance. Like most men of the London Brigade, he had served in the Royal Navy, and was anxious to get a berth on one of the Seine gunboats.

"I am sure," he said, "I would win the Legion of Honour if we were struck once by a cannon ball, 'cos why, you see, sir, I'd run my head through the hole and shout '*Vive la France!*' A shot ain't never likely to come twict in the same spot."

John had a well-founded contempt for the Parisian fire-organization. The English steam engines which had been left in charge of Frenchmen were in such a condition—pipes filthy, brasses corroded, hose inextricably twisted—that they were unfit for work. As fact, I believe they were used less for their legitimate purpose than for pumping up drinking water from the Seine. The departure of the English did not affect me or my friend O'Donovan much. In fact, we were, so to speak, Parisians, and would be sneered at under the rose as “peculiar” by the majority of those who remained. We did not admire the game of cribbage, and we did not affect stable-talk; and these were the principal distractions of one large class of the British residuum. If we were as ready to foregather with the humblest of God's beings as anybody, it was with a self-respecting humbleness, for we were both touchy on some social points, and would resent any attempt at undue familiarity or offensive patronage if we did not laugh it down. We believed—and still believe—in no donship but that of intellect and worth. It is still to me an

extreme satisfaction to snub any upstart booby who affects airs of importance or condescension because he has money in the funds, or has been elevated by a capricious whirl of the wheel of fortune into a position of authority which turns his weak head, or because he imagines he is very wise, or very learned, or very religious, and carries a latchkey to a heaven of his own in his fob. No individual of genuine properties, to him of person or inheritance, can be such a booby. We avoided the gentlemen of my own calling of intent: we had no favours to grant, and we would ask none, and so we were thrown very much on our own resources. The paucity of books was what we chiefly deplored. Most of the men we cared for had left; we had a rare visit from Nicholas Walsh, the painter; but he was all in all in his art, and had no books to lend us, so that we had to read and re-read and annotate our own small stock. Unhappy the being, most lorn of all luckless hermits, who cannot find company in the printed lore of the great ones of the past. His, indeed, is unblest and most fruitless of solitudes. We both loved books as Ruskin loves



them, and envied none in that beleaguered city their society; for when we willed we could invite guests superior to theirs—guests who never refused the invitation, who never bored us, whom we could dismiss when we chose, and pique them not; and they roused us with their eloquence, warmed us with their enthusiasm, gave us joy with their wit, and content and dignity with their honeyed wisdom—in sum, made us feel better and purer and happier, and more like to the gods. Is not the good book the true philosopher's stone, the writer thereof the legitimate alchemist who spreads light even into the crevices of the Noah's Ark we have shipped in on this mundane voyage? What magician's wand can perform such feats; what Thessalian philter can work such wonders? Immersed in a ballad by Davis on the walls of a fire-girt Italian city, I have been unconscious that bombs were falling around; carried away by a novel of Thackeray, I have forgotten the qualms of sea-sickness and the howlings of an Atlantic gale. The man who loves books is a millionaire; he can snap his fingers at poverty and smile at the

restraints of chains and bars. But he must have wherewithal to eat occasionally ; nature demands that. And so when O'Donovan and I had done our work, and read all available books, and run the tank of conversation dry, we were fain to go upon the food-prowl. Not always with success.

At times the siege was getting as tame as an average Parliamentary debate, and I felt like a worn-out victim to party-loyalty who dare not quit the bench until the division. O'Donovan took matters altogether too seriously. I proposed to him once that we should call my domicile a "wigwam," our gossip "powwows," my housekeeper "squaw," the concierge's offspring "papooses," and conduct ourselves generally as if we were noble savages.

"You are getting too ridiculous," grunted O'Donovan. "As soon as I finish this calumet, I mean to strike a trail for the nearest cat's-meat shop."

He would not enter into the spirit of any of my artifices for cheating monotony. He shrugged his shoulders when I tried to coax a tune out of a

child's mouth-organ ; he derided my very skilful imitations of the denizens of the farmyard. Hunger makes some people surly. I was driven in self-defence to write letters to myself, and drop them surreptitiously into post-offices in distant quarters of the town, and go through the comedy of surprise at receiving them next morning, until an-event occurred which helped to stir the pool of our stagnant half-starved existence or rather vegetation.

I was suspected to be the most barefaced, desperate and artful of Prussian spies !

A woman—bless her innocence !—was at the bottom of it all. The woman was my old Austrian housekeeper. An individual with more effusive patriotism than balanced judgment, and more leisure than he knew how to dispose of, had set himself the task of watching me. He was certain I was a Prussian : he had overheard me talking *Prussian* with Madame Wilma. I had a spectacled visitor who wore long hair and smoked. He must be a Prussian too. Were not all Prussians spectacled, and did they not all wear long hair and

smoke? Besides, what could we mean by consulting maps spread with effrontery on the table before us, unless we were staff-officers? and were not those letters, which we laboured over, undeniable reports for transmission to Versailles? This amateur detective absolutely "denounced" my concierge at the Mairie as harbouring and giving comfort to the enemy; I am bound to add that the people at the Mairie disregarded the denunciation. But he had enlisted a willing corps of idle housewives under his banner, and they devoted themselves in rotation to observing my movements. I was under surveillance. The situation—to use a word in vogue at the time—began to be highly uncomfortable. My concierge met me in the hall one day, quite accidentally (he had been waiting the moment of my going out patiently for hours, I was confident), and asked me, in the most ingenuous way, would I not like to have a chassepot?

"What to do with it?" I as ingenuously inquired. He stared at me in surprise, and answered:

"Why, of course, to shoot the invaders."

His surprise was not diminished when I gave

him a short lesson on international law, telling him that if I, a neutral, killed a Prussian, I would be guilty of murder; and that if I were even caught with arms in my hands by the enemy, I would enjoy the treat of being put against the nearest wall and perforated with bullets, according to the usages of civilized warfare—a treat I did not in the least ambition. As for invaders, I was a man of peace, and would let the world alone if the world let me alone; the only invaders I might be tempted to notice were those rascals of Paris, of whom General Trochu had spoken; and if they took it into their heads to intrude on my privacy, I was prepared to shoot them as long and as fast as bullets would last and revolver would carry.

From that interview I was a marked man. My incomings and outgoings were jealously scrutinized. If Inspector Pollaky were there, he might have picked up some valuable hints on the polite art of Private Inquiry. I irritated the Paul Pry brood by my temerity. The bold course is always the best with these folk. I always talked *Prussian* with Madame Wilma now; I showed the concierge

who was a National Guard and slept in his striped trousers, how they handled rifles in some services ; and I refused to contribute towards a patriotic fund for cannon, but gave double the amount asked for aid to the sick and distressed. But this surveillance was a nuisance. At last Providence helped me to turn the tables on my persecutor.

The bell was rung one morning by a stranger :

"Monsieur is a foreigner?" he courteously asked, as he uncovered and entered.

"A British subject at your service ; pray take a chair."

My visitor immediately began speaking English, and turned out to be a very agreeable gentleman and a confrère to boot, no less than M. Francis Wey, author of "*Les Anglais chez Eux*," and formerly President of the Society "*des Gens de Lettres*." He explained that he had come to recruit for a corps which was strictly non-combatant, and in a fine access of strictly non-martial enthusiasm I joined its ranks. It was composed of inhabitants of the quarter who were legally exempt from service in the National Guard—that is to say, those

under twenty and over fifty years of age, the halt, the hunchback, the phthisicky, and all resident foreigners. What were its duties? To watch over order in the interior while the citizen-soldiers were on the ramparts, to superintend the distribution of rations at the butchers', to help to put down fires in case of bombardment; in fact, added M. Wey, "we are a sort of cross between your special constable and our *pompier*." Knowing that a mighty ruler who had moved off in a sedan-chair had been once a special constable, and having a lively recollection of a lyric about the *pompier*s of Nanterre, I felt proud of my functions. I went next morning to the headquarters of Section B, of the Corps Civique de Sécurité, of the Quartier St. Georges of the 9th Arrondissement. The headquarters was at 6 in the Rue Pigalle, and was a big guardroom-looking place with a roaring fire.

My comrades were filtering in slowly, and looked for the most part as if they were survivors of the retreat from Moscow, whose recent campaigns had been confined to the warm seat in the sunshine or the warm corner by the stove. They mumbled

guttural good-mornings and exchanged cough-lozenges prior to the main business, which consisted in a sleek, well-fed, middle-aged, municipal personage making prolix speeches, tintured with the irrepressible essence of routine. At length they were detailed for duty and tottered off. I, being new to the calls of the service, was left as barrack-guard with a grey-haired gentleman with the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour in his button-hole, and a blinking gentleman in a skull-cap who might have been my great-grandfather. We sat by the fire.

"This is a rum go," said the decorated man in English. "What the deuce did you stop in Paris for?"

I was startled, as well I might have been, but concealed it, and quickly said I would tell him if he would kindly inform me why he had remained.

"Necessity has no law," he answered; "my household gods are here. I'm an artist and an Imperialist. Damn their Republic! Princess Mathilde was my best patron. I must stay where my livelihood is; although a British subject, I would be a greater foreigner in London to-day than here."



We became friendly, and had a long chat about art, which was interrupted by the blinking nonagerian, who had just woken from a nap and handed me his snuff-box, muttering in a voice remarkably distinct for his age :

“Heh, heh ! if little Thiers were in Paris, he would be one of ours, heh, heh !”

I was settling down for a gossip with this animated fossil, expecting that I might be able to enrich my note-book with some memoranda as to the personal habits of the executioner of Louis Seize and the complexion of Robespierre, when M. Wey came in, shook hands with me cordially, and informed me that I had been made a Brigadier as a compliment to my nationality. A Brigadier, I believe, is a sort of corporal-major. I was pained to hear I could not wear a sword—the Corps Civique was unarmed. What ! no weapons—a warrior of comic opera. He thought I might venture on a cap with a silver band, which gratified me much. I had woven a plot by that fire. At leaving after my round of service, I was presented with a red woollen armlet with a municipal

stamp upon it, which I was to assume on duty. I bought a silver-banded cap, and the devil inciting, I called on my persecutor—the officious sillikins who had denounced me—asked him for his papers, as I had grave suspicions that he was a Berliner from his general intelligence, and his manner of speaking the French language.

“But I speak French as a native,” he said.

“Precisely so, monsieur—you speak it too well; it is notorious that spies are chosen for that very reason. Come with me to the Mairie. Do you oppose my authority?”

“This is an outrage—this is too strong. Where is your authority?”

I put on my red armlet with a conquering air, and sardonically bowed.

“Now if you are a good citizen, you will accompany me—unless, indeed, you have some reputable friend in the neighbourhood who will go bail for your loyalty?”

The friend was found, we adjourned to the wine-shop of Citizen Prassophagus, had reciprocal explanations, compliments and congratulations, and I left

my persecutor blushing at the tribute to his intelligence in taking him for a secret agent of Bismarck, and was rid of any more annoyance on the score of being a Prussian spy—at least in my own district. There is much virtue in a silver band and a red armlet.

Although French arms were uniformly unlucky throughout the campaign, the fortune of war had been unfaithful to the enemy in individual cases. There were German prisoners in Paris, not many certainly—less privates than there were surrendered French generals in Germany. These children of the Fatherland were caged in the Roquette, that low, square, repulsive block of brown building, in front of which Troppmann and so many other miscreants had been guillotined. The ordinary military prison is in the Rue de Cherche-Midi; but the candidates for admission there being in excess of what it could accommodate, the Roquette was set apart as an auxiliary establishment. Its inmates were divided into two classes—the French, consisting of deserters and marauders; and the Germans, all prisoners of war. The former were naturally

treated with much more severity, being kept in solitary confinement and very poorly fed. The Germans (of whom there were seventy-seven) had a day-room where they assembled to chat, read, play cards, and amuse themselves as they pleased. They were deprived of nothing but liberty. Their diet was quite as good as that of the majority of the defenders of the city, and they seemed astonished and grateful at the excellent treatment they received. Many of them had imagined they would have been shot when captured. They were mostly very young, and all could read and write. More than half were in the light blue uniform of Bavaria. After them Badeners were most numerous; there were also some Poles from Posen; but Prussians proper were scarce. There was a solitary Uhlan, he who had been caught on the 16th of September. A visit was paid to these captives under guidance of one of the chaplains, a venerable white-haired man with benevolence in his mild eyes. He brought a holy zeal to his labour, and as he spoke German, he was peculiarly fitted for his present mission. One very handsome stripling was singing a hymn as

the visitors entered, and his comrades joined in with a surprising precision of harmony. At the request of the chaplain, who was a great favourite, they burst into a cheerful, sonorous *lied*, a marching chorus. It may be doing them an injustice, but one could not help thinking that the greater part of these martyrs to circumstance were rather better pleased, on the whole, to be under lock and key than to be holding hazardous vigils on a bleak forepost. He who had led the hymn had a flute, and old numbers of the *Gartenlaube* were scattered about the large room, with some copies of the romances of Auerbach and others provided by the broad-minded chaplain. The sole complaint was the impossibility of getting news from home, although the Government had generously allowed them to avail themselves of the balloon-post.

## CHAPTER XI.

Growth of Drunkenness—The Theatres—Timothée Trimm's Conference — The Clubs — Effect of Door-steps on Political Opinion—Hatred of Imperialism—Gil-Perès and the Donkeys—On the Ramparts—A French Red-Indian—Victory at Last—The Plague of Small-pox and Proclamations—Massacre of Marauders—Making Merry on Herb-Tea—A Distressed Cockney.

THE greyness of existence under the skies of November was daily becoming duller. Amusement was a necessity. People craved something to divert them, to lighten the stress of an excitement which was getting wearisome; for even excitement can stale from repetition, and calls for variety. Hard work is one of the best remedies for lassitude, if not the only true specific; but hard work was impossible. There was no hope of reward to sweeten toil; there was an enforced suspension of business, and it is not given to every temperament to solace itself in reading, or in meditation, or in innocent

pleasures. If this were an English community, we should have had cricket or football matches, or perhaps a race-meeting. At Paris, where the athletic forms of out-of-door recreation, except dancing, are not popular, the National Guards resorted to such lazy pastimes as pitch-and-toss and bowls. They took to drinking, too; the "hour of absinthe" was never more religiously observed, although the main object ought to have been to appease, not to increase, appetite; and the indulgence in cheap coarse wine and fiery brandy was greater than the oldest inhabitant could remember. It was no uncommon scandal for men to appear tipsy under arms, and to march to duty on a crooked line. Inebriety, which is not a French vice, was rapidly attaining that pre-eminence. I am afraid some drank to inflame their natural ferocity. They felt the force of the old song, of which they may have never heard :

" Your fighting-man, Croat or Cossack,  
If valour he happens to lack,  
His courage to jog  
Finds a rummer of grog  
The best friend he has to his back."

At least one blowsy, muscular poltroon, whom I met on the Boulevard Montmartre, did. He was a Freeshooter, and had a masonic emblem pinned on his breast. When I remarked that that was neither decoration nor military medal, he huskily answered with a leer and an oath that it was better—many of the Prussians were Freemasons, and when they recognised the brotherly symbol they would not kill him. He had evidently made up his mind to be taken prisoner; but unless he treated himself to a long sleep and copious lavements, it was to be feared he would not reach the front in time to be captured soon enough. His breath, as he staggered off, smelt like a sewer into which a keg of confiscated spirits had been emptied. But few of the Parisians were to be classed with that degraded sot. There were excuses for them. They were ill nurtured, they were unoccupied, they were thrown into each other's company for long hours of indolence, and in their social expansiveness they pledged each other and the mother-country in the vile potations which were the only stimulants they could procure economically and abundantly; and



vile potations on a vacuous stomach soon work villainous results. Drunkenness, as a habit, is only too easily acquired. I never heard the statistics of the growth of the habit in beleaguered Paris from a high-priest of temperance, nor do I wish to; statistics are not to be relied on: we all know the story of the colonel of a regiment in India who was asked to furnish some information as to the teetotalers in his corps, and answered that fifty per cent. of them had been invalided home, and fifty per cent. had died. The fact was, there were but two in the ranks, and one had collapsed from snake-bite after the other had been sent to England suffering from water on the brain. The Parisians of the siege did get inordinately fond of strong liquor. Their plea was that they had no relaxation; the theatres should never have been shut. At last, thanks principally to the persuasion of M. Francisque Sarcey, the dramatic critic, means were found to open the doors of some of the houses. He reasoned on the same base as those authorities of Saragossa who produced the "Numantia" of Cervantes during the siege by the French, in order to

animate and sustain the garrison. The experiment was tried furtively at first and at intervals—always under the pretext of charity or patriotism. But, by degrees, it came to be admitted that it was an error to subject a city to the famine of distractions in addition to that of food. The Ambigu-Comique was the first theatre which had the honesty to throw back its portals for the advertised object of amusing the public and paying its servants. Others permitted their scene-shifters, stage-carpenters, “supers,” and the like, to draw on the Government for their thirty sous a day as needy citizen-soldiers. Some of them could not be reopened for the reason that they had been converted into hospitals; others for the less creditable reason that their favourite actors, leading men with more voice than heart, and die-away darlings with more beauty than brains, had packed up their dressing-cases and prudently flitted at the warning signal of danger. These persons had joined the contemptible host of *francs-fileurs*, who had emigrated to the security of London, Madrid, and Brussels.

Conferences were occasionally given on the boards

of some of the abandoned playhouses. How can I describe what is a lecture, and yet not a lecture? A conference, unless he who delivers it is a master of the art of elocution, and his subject is fascinating of itself, is one of the most ingenious inventions of refined cruelty. It is a cross between a droning sermon and a schoolboy recitation—a species of mental thumb-screw. I went to hear “Timothée Trimm”—that is to say, Léon Lespès, the barber with a smattering of education, who wrote a column of coloured platitudes in the *Petit Journal* every day—I went to hear him once, never again. A model oracle of the bourgeoisie with the true bourgeois mind was this pursy full-bodied creature in grandiose attire, all shirt-front and watch-chain, who puffed like a broken-winded seal through a series of sentences of turgid commonplace. What the conference was about I cannot recall—that was his fault; but I distinctly recollect that before he had half finished it I felt inclined to throw things at his head.

The clubs were far more interesting than the conferences. There was generally a furious

earnestness in the oratory and sometimes genuine fun, conscious and unconscious ; the former supplied by the humorists who dropped in to kill time, the latter by the eccentrics. Curiosity impelled me one night to attend a meeting of the radical revolutionary party in a concert-hall called the "Bataclan." Beside me was a little man who was very anxious to get a look at the platform where the speakers were, but was prevented by a fellow in front of him who kept his hat on his head.

"Take off your hat," cried the little man at last ;  
"I can't see anything."

"All right," replied the other ; "but if I take it off you'll see less ; my hairs are thirteen inches long, and always stand on end. I keep my hat on expressly to flatten them down !"

At the same meeting it was that I overheard a cynic, with a glass foppishly screwed in one eye (why do not purblind males, like females, wear double-glasses or spectacles?), utter a profoundly philosophic truism.

"Where is Montaland ? I don't see Montaland,"

said his neighbour. This seemed to be some missing friend of the cause.

"My dear," said the man with the eyeglass, "Montaland has just rented a house and is becoming beastly conservative! When a man has a doorstep he can call his own, he often changes opinions," and he sententiously wagged his head.

"He may become conservative, but he can never become an aristocrat," muttered the other bitterly. "He will make a good bourgeois. A soldier is better than a dog; but a dog is better than a bourgeois."\*

The philosophic truism in the foregoing dialogue—lest anyone should accuse me of approving the insult to the dog—lay in the enunciation of the effect of door-steps on political opinions.

The sole sentiment at these meetings in which there was unanimity was detestation for the Empire. There was none with the hardihood to offer the smallest apology for the fallen dynasty.

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\* Perhaps I had better give my conception of a bourgeois. I translate the word "huckster," and I hold the article itself, which usually has a huckstering soul, in extreme antipathy.

That which to some, if not many, of those parasites of prosperity had been "luscious as locusts," was now "bitter as coloquintida." The word "Empire" unloosed a hyena chorus of howls, and set teeth gnashing. An anecdote which was current, and was relished, will show the revulsion of feeling towards the man who had been all-powerful and acclaimed a few months before. Much indignation had been excited amongst the populace by the revelations of how the public money had been squandered under the Imperial rule, as contained in the papers found at the Tuileries. A workman presented himself at the Mairie in the Rue Drouot, one day.

"You are changing the names of the streets?" he said.

He was answered in the affirmative.

"Very well, I want you to call mine the street of Napoleon III."

The officials stared at him in surprise, thinking he was a lunatic or an Imperialist.

"Perhaps I ought to add," he continued with a grin, "that I live in Cutpurse Row!"

If the antipathy to Imperialism was strong then,

how much stronger was it not when the bombs shrieked through the thoroughfares? The cry of melancholy irony was raised, that the aptest motto for the crowning of the Napoleonic edifice would be : *Finem coronat obus !* •

There must have been jollity in some of the lodgments of the National Guards by the ramparts. Certes, there was gambling, and drinking, and singing, and declamation. Hyacinthe was in one of these battalions, Hyacinthe of the Palais Royal, a low-comedy actor with facial recommendations which made him as popular as Wright of the Adelphi had been to Londoners of the previous generation. He had a Slawkenbergian nose. That nose often furnished a dinner to the witlings of the minor journals. When Hyacinthe snored, his comrades affected to think it was the archangel's trumpet which had sounded ; when he sneezed, that a bomb had detonated in their midst. Gil Perès was also in the train-bands. They told a story of his having been on sentry outside a post one night, with orders to let none pass who could not give the countersign.

On a sudden, the sleepers were roused by a strident challenge in the actor's voice :

"You don't know the word. Shan't pass then. 'Tis no use looking at me with your great idiotic eyes. Stand back, or I'll fire!"

His friends rushed out to the assistance of the sentinel. The practical joker had been apostrophizing a pair of wandering donkeys. This was before donkeys had become quadrupeds of price.

But this rampart-service was losing its attractiveness as the weather grew inclement. Eighteen thousand men were taken from their homes every day to guard a line of inaccessible fortifications. A sixth of their number would have been ample for the formality. They never saw an armed German. The only troops within view, and the front was miles off, were French. Except those actually on sentry or picket-duty, they had no resource but that which Satan provides for the idle ; and yet they could have been practised route-marching or put through a course of musketry instruction.

In this first moiety of November there was little going on at the outposts. General Schmitz had to



content himself with such details as the surprise of six Prussians at St. Cloud by Captain de Néverlee's Scouts, and the legendary doings of one Sergeant Ignatius Hoff, of the 107th of the Line. Hoff was a hero of the stamp of those who figure in Fenimore Cooper's tales of forest warfare. He must have been born with the gifts of a trapper. The story of his exploits called up boyish recollections of the arts employed by Hawkeye, Deerslayer, Leatherstocking, and others of that ilk. He was always on the war-path, untiring as a sleuth-hound, patient as a cat watching a mouse, deadly in his spring as a panther. He shadowed a Prussian as surely as a Sioux would an enemy of his tribe, and he could follow him up to the death with the same savage pertinacity. Hoff had been known to dig a hole silently during the darkness, and ensconcing himself there like a fox in his covert, to wait the livelong day till he got an opportunity at nightfall to creep out stealthily behind a sentry, flash a knife into his ribs, and while a horrid gurgle in the throat proclaimed another dead man, get back on all-fours to his comrades, chuckling and

elated. I only wonder he did not scalp those he killed. Lest it might be thought I am exaggerating, here is the literal translation of an official reference to Hoff and his exploits:—"Killed on the 29th of September, three of the enemy's sentinels; on the 1st of October, a Prussian officer; on the 5th, in ambuscade with 15 men, routed a body of infantry and cavalry; on the 13th, killed two of the enemy's horsemen. Finally, in various individual combats, he has killed 27 Prussians."

On the 14th, the Governor produced a proclamation from the inexhaustible stock up his sleeve, which patted the National Guard on the back and praised them for their "incomparable zeal" which would soon enable them to enter into line, and ended by enforcing the necessity of giving the country a "great example." This meant fighting, if anything; but most of these petted men-at-arms had weak stomach for fight. They secretly hoped for an armistice which might be harbinger of peace, and whispers of such an arrangement being on the carpet were prevalent. But some of them talked loftily. I met a podgy restaurant-keeper who

bullied his waiters, and, I am very much afraid, would often have liked to beat his amiable wife, and he boasted that he was perfect in the handling of his *tabatière* rifle, and only wished he could have a crack at the *sacr-r-r-é* Prussians. A frown from one of Budritzki's grenadiers would frighten the five senses out of the apoplectic snarling cur.

But the whisper of armistice ceased in the evening, when a bulletin was issued that the French, under General d'Aurelles de Paladines, had driven the Germans out of Orleans. The army of relief was advancing; exultation was ecstatic. *Figaro* saw the finger of God in the locality of this first victory. Had not a saviour come to France already out of Orleans? D'Aurelles de Paladines was a modern Jeanne d'Arc.

In the middle of November small-pox was rife. In one week there were five hundred deaths from that fell disease, mostly among the inhabitants of the villages, who had come in to avoid danger which might end in death. On the 17th Trochu sent out one of those wearisome proclamations, which lent a new pang to the miseries of the siege. His "ex-

uberant verbosity"—to borrow a phrase applied to another, who at least had the excuse that he was not a professional soldier—was sickening. Paris had done marvels, like de Failly's chassepots at Mentana. He doubted, indeed, whether any great city had ever opposed to apparently irreparable disasters more vigorous efforts of moral and material resistance. Well, what city had such resources? Finally, if they succumbed they would bequeath to Prussia a heritage of maledictions and hatreds under which she would succumb in her turn. What academically balanced tomfoolery this round man in a square hole flung off his quill! He should have been a prize essayist. The enemy thundered at the gates, and he sat him to his desk and composed rhetorical periods!

While the General was revelling in printer's ink a large body of scarecrow marauders, a host in themselves, left by the gate of Pantin to gather what vegetables they could on the plain towards Bobigny. They were suddenly fired upon by a patrol of Badeners from the edge of a shrubbery, and thirty of the unfortunates, some of them

women, fell under the volley. Their companions rushed back to the fortifications, bringing with them the stuff for which they had risked their lives. Nogent pitched a few shells towards those merciless Badeners. On the 18th the foragers were out again, garnering what harvest they could until the drawbridges were raised at five. When a head of cabbage was bought for a franc and a half, the temptation to poor devildom to try and bring back a barrowful was irresistible. Provisions were diminishing, and there were 10,202 soldiers and Mobiles in hospital from wounds and sickness. And the aged females and infants? They needed nourishment. True, there were 6,000 milch cows still in the city, but they were not to be slaughtered until the last extremity. We were feeling the pressure of the screw already, and I cannot give more correct idea of how it affected us than by copying unaltered the entry in my diary for this 18th November :

“The existing daily ration of fresh meat for the troops outside is one-fifth of a pound English, but they get a pint of wine and plenty of good bread.

In the 9th Arrondissement, where I reside, the daily allowance of fresh meat for adults is less than one-tenth of a pound English, and in a few days salt rations will be delivered at every alternate distribution. The grocers, Italian warehousemen, and hucksters generally, have set exorbitant prices on the articles they sell since the scarcity set in. There have been some symptoms of rioting at their doors, and unless they change their policy before the scarcity becomes dearth, I would not give much for their personal safety. There is suffering bravely borne, though nothing to entitle us to brag about it yet. The first to complain are those who have the least right—the tribe of servants.

“I visited an acquaintance a few nights ago. Around a stove with a fire in it that looked very like one of those matches called vesuvians when it is on the point of going out, he sat with two friends, a shivering but happy trio—three gentlemen of family, whose resources are exhausted in consequence of all communication with their friends having been cut off since the investment. Those three men were drinking a *tisane*, making themselves

merry on herb-tea! They hospitably invited me to join in, which I did with a heart and a half, and I assure you I have seldom enjoyed more agreeable moments.

‘We spent them not in toys, in lusts, or wine,’

for very excellent and cogent reasons,

‘But search of deep philosophy,  
Wit, eloquence, and poetry,’

arts which I cannot pretend to much skill in, but which I love nevertheless. We had a tune on the cithara, which my acquaintance touches to perfection; and when the vital spark quitted that funny little fire we danced a four-handed reel to make ourselves warm. It was ‘awfully jolly;’ but on the whole, I am weak enough to own, I would have preferred to have tripped it on a polished floor I know in Vienna, or to have nestled by a certain coal fire in Gravesend. Before leaving the improvised ball-room we swore eternal friendship over a parting bowl of camomile, and I left the company happy in the prospect that they are going to do some real fighting shortly. They belong to the National Guard—the war battalions, for they

have all volunteered—and receive their thirty sous a day. That is how they live. Now, I submit that those three gentlemen are philosophers, are patriots in the true sense of the word. And yet not one of them is a Red Republican, ever made a speech in the Folies-Bergère, or signed an article in the *Rappel*. Of another stamp is that London machinist who came over of his own free will, before the siege, on a well-paid engagement. He has plenty of money, but he is the most miserable being out of Cockaigne.

“ ‘ Ah, sir,’ he said to me in a melancholy tone in a restaurant where I chanced to meet him, ‘ it is very hard lines to be obliged to put up with milkless tea and dry bread when one’s a-been accustomed to welks or ’creases, or summut of a relish to breakfast!’

“ Certainly when a man has been reared in the midst of these luxuries, the state of siege must be a hardship. Want of food is not the only privation that threatens us. Gas-light begins to fail; the Café Riche was lit with petroleum from seven o’clock last night, and in a few nights more the mains will be turned off generally, and Paris will



present the aspect of London in the times when the curfew bell was rung, and the streets were crossed at long intervals by ropes with swinging lamps of oil. But the great trial is the absence of news from those abroad. Not a line from the family except for the small number who have got messages by pigeons. For weeks we were dependent for all we knew of the rest of creation on stray pages of the *Kölnische Zeitung*, found wrapped round sausages in the pockets of dead Rhinelanders, or odd copies of the Franco-Prussian journal of Versailles, brought in by some enterprising marauder. Occasionally a London paper was smuggled. When passages from these chance chronicles were re-tailed by the Paris editors there was a perfect rush upon the stalls. Villemessant, of the *Figaro*, 'the greatest newspaper speculator in Europe,' would give a thousand francs for a copy of the *Standard*, and complains that the privileged mortals who have been able to get a loan of an occasional English paper have been too sparing in their extracts from its pages. They have doled out the news homœopathically to starved Paris."

## CHAPTER XII.

A Singular Dream—Jullien in Excelsis—Serenading the Enemy—Short Commons—The Daughters of the Regiment—Blanche d'Antigny—A War Battalion Going to the Front—Frolicsome Foot-Chasseurs—An Operatic Star Sets—Death of a Grand Old Man—Malingerers—"Blooding" the National Guard—The Forest of Bondy—Publications of the "Committee of Indelicacy"—The Shortcomings of the Empire—An Official Jeremiad—A Mercenary Girl—The Man without Ears—Shopkeepers' Rapacity—Gaulish Gaiety—The Crisis at Hand.

ON the night of the 20th November, I had the folly to yield to an invitation from Nick Walsh to accompany him to our old boarding-house on the slope of the Mountain of Ste. Geneviève between the Panthéon and the Zoological Garden. The house was surmounted by a shaky belvedere, commanding such a view of Paris as Quasimodo must have had from the turrets of Notre Dame. It was an ugly night. The rain and the wind were hard at it,

fighting each other as if the respective divinities which presided over these elements had matched them, and had a considerable bet on the result. I was easily prevailed upon to accept a shake-down from my friend. At going to bed, I think the rain had the better of it; great water-spouts splashed from the skies as if the breeze had lent them a back, and they had taken advantage of it to hurry down, much as the poets pretend the angels slide from above on the arch of a rainbow when they have a night's furlough on earth. By-and-by Æolus waxed audacious, and sent his forces upwards and about, and to and fro; advanced them in close column and extended line, *en échelon* and in swarms, with now and then a furious charge, until the rain almost gave in, hesitated, and sputtered hither and thither in feeble discouraged sprays. The wind was victorious, and Æolus planted his banners in a sort of debauch of zigzag eddy. I had scarcely settled myself to sleep, when another of my classical acquaintances, Oneiros, the dream-god, stepped in to challenge the sway of Jupiter Pluvius and the son of Hippotas. I was in Liverpool, in St. George's

Hall, at one of Jullien's monster-concerts. The conductor was in front of me in his irrepressible white waistcoat; a multitudinous orchestra, attentive to his movements, was ranged behind. Such an array of drummers! The three front rows were occupied exclusively by the small drums, next came the tenor drums, then the big drums, and lastly there was a colossal cylinder suspended from the roof at the back, beside which a huge gold-beater's arm holding a Nasmyth hammer was imminently stretched. I was at a loss to make out what that might be, till a gentleman, with a magenta nose and a smell of juniper-berries on his breath, leant over confidentially and told me that that was the drum-major—he knew; he had been in the profession. At the moment, Jullien struck an attitude; there was a hush of expectancy, and as the leader lifted his bâton there was a shiver of baguettes over the small drums, and as the bâton fell, a shrill roulade reverberated like to a billion of hard pease in the agonies of St. Vitus's dance on a platform of empty cigar-boxes. Another motion of the staff: there was a rousing ran-tan-plan of the tenor drums—one to make the

joy of all the nurseries in Christendom. Yet another jerk of the bâton, and dominating the sound came the deep re-echoing rumble of the big drums. Jullien sprang up and down like a Jullien on wires, his right hand twitched as if the wand he grasped were a galvanic apparatus ; it was clear that the meridian moment was nigh. The bâton almost bounded out of his fingers in a final spasm, and the Nasmyth hammer crashed on the cylinder.

"Sir, that is not music ; it is a thunder-baby springing from the bosom of an earthquake," said the man with the magenta nose ; and I tumbled out of bed, thoroughly awakened by the shock.

The report of one of the heavy guns at Ivry, blown on a favouring gust towards the town, was what I had taken for the phenomenal drum of Jullien's concert.

Walsh was on the landing—he, too, had been roused.

"Great heavens !" he cried. "Did you hear that ? I thought the house was coming down."

We both ran up to the shaky belvedere, but we could see nothing for the pitch-darkness except

a rapid succession of remote red flashes; and at lengthened spans the far-away gleam of the electric light from the forts, as if a giant lamp had been opened by some spectral guardian of the night. What could this vehement firing in such weather bode? Had the enemy attempted an assault, or was the cannonade intended to cover the great sortie? It may readily be divined with what anxiety we awaited the military report, which was usually posted outside the Mayoralty of the 9th Arrondissement every evening. This was its purport :

“During last night there was a lively fusillade in front of our lines to the south ; it was supported by the guns of the forts. There was nothing particular worth noticing.”

In other words, the artillerists were firing for the love of noise, or mayhap they were pounding into pulp some of those pasteboard batteries which, it was whispered, the Prussians had set up for their amusement.

As one could not be in two places at once, unless he were an Uhlan, these military reports, curt and

behindhand as they were, were often the first intimation we received of what was going on, and generally the least unreliable. A phrase, "happy combats," sometimes occurred in them which raised my gorge. I may be wrong, but I pronounce this a gross contradiction of terms. The Government having asked information about that unfortunate massacre of the licensed plunderers on the Plain of Bondy, learned that the behaviour of these poor wretches was attended with serious perils for the defence. On the morning of the 19th, while they were out, several Prussian soldiers, disguised as workmen, and having their rifles hid under their blouses, insinuated themselves along the banks of the Canal de l'Ourcq till they came to the outer line of French entrenchments, when they fired at almost point-blank range on an advanced sentinel of the 1st Regiment of Eclaireurs. This was Red Indian warfare.

The food question was getting imperative. On the 21st, the last distribution of fresh meat to civilians was made. A small modicum was to be delivered daily for the ailing on presentation of a

medical certificate. Beef-steaks—not horse-steaks—I learned, were to be had up to a few days previously in some of the restaurants at fancy prices. This abuse was accounted for simply. When requisition was made of the horned cattle, numbers of oxen were driven outside the fortifications, where no restrictions existed, to re-enter as dead meat.

Calling in to a neighbourly vintner's in the evening, the landlady intoned me a monody. She was a born Parisian—twenty-five years married and in business—and now, for the first time in her life, she had to sit down to soup and a saucer of jam for dinner. I had rather a sympathy for this good woman, as I was on my way back from two eating-houses where I had been in the habit of taking my meals alternately. Both were shut, and on the doors were notices that the establishments were closed till the morrow for want of meat. Here was a fix for a hungry man. When I returned home, the first words that caught my eye in an old London newspaper were the heading of an advertisement: "Where shall I dine to-day?" Aye, that was the question. But there



is always a Providence for those who help themselves. I recollected there was rice and sugar on the premises, and in a few minutes my aged house-keeper had a smoking pillau on the table that would fatten a Circassian beauty for the Turkish market. As I lolled in self-satisfied repletion after the feast, I read the *Official Journal*, which had got hold of its colleague of Versailles, and copied it in full, giving, among other tid-bits, Bismarck's circular relating the failure of the negotiations for an armistice, and laying the blame on the Provisional Government. On the next day Jules Favre's rejoinder to this circular, an affectation of firmness thinly disguising the vein of discouragement, was published.

At noon, seven war-battalions of the National Guard were reviewed opposite the New Opera. They were spruce, though a soaking rain was pouring, and marched past tolerably well. They were mostly officered by ex-army sergeants, and showed it by their attention to distance and dressing. These train-bands made a good impression; there was no bubbling enthusiasm amongst them, but there was

the groundwork of discipline. Unfortunately, but I suppose this is inseparable from all French organizations, there were too many *poseurs* in their ranks. And why tolerate that absurdity of half-a-dozen vivandières in front of each battalion, tricked out in theatrical Bloomer costume, with dandy hats with feathers; their jackets bedizened with facings, froggings, and cuffs of red; their petticoats piped with red, and puffed out; little liqueur-kegs, painted in the three colours, slung on their hips; and real daggers by their sides? At such an hour for the destinies of the country, this ludicrous travesty was painful. Admitting that the canteen is of first necessity to a corps on active service (I deny it myself), it should be tended by men, not by women who abdicate whatever is graceful in their sex, for that the practical vivandière does to all intents and purposes. It must be borne in mind that there are two classes of vivandières: the hard-featured, avaricious, hoarse sutler of the Moll Flanders type—she has some *raison d'être*; and the rosy-cheeked (breathe not the suspicion of paint!), tastefully got-up damsel with embroidered pelisse and Tyro-

lean beaver, who is quite too ornamental to be useful, and bears the same relation to the genuine article that Gabrielle de la Périne, the bouquet-seller to the Jockey Club, would to a flower-girl in Covent Garden Market. The sight of these vivandières was irritating. They should lay up their uniform in lavender till carnival; or, if they must follow the drum, they should wait for the restoration of peace.

They told a story of Blanche d'Antigny, the buxom burlesque actress, having offered herself as cantinière to the 50th Battalion of Mobiles; but as it is an indispensable condition in France that the ladies serving in this capacity should wear a wedding-ring, she had to be refused. A venerable sergeant volunteered to espouse her on the spot, but she declined to subject him to such a sacrifice, and elected to become a nurse.

The rules in the National Guard can hardly have been so stringent. Some of these charming vixens may not have been married, some may have been much married, and others may have had their husbands in the regiment. Would they go out to

the forts with them? I trow not. Heroines are always spinsters—Joan d'Arc and the Maid of Saragossa to wit—although Flora MacDonald bore herself heroically when she was Mrs. Somebody; but there is no romance in a married lady hieing to the wars from her work-table and cooking-stove. Dear me, how ungallant rough fare, and not enough of it, makes even a devoted worshipper of the sex like myself! But if I love woman, I hate sham.

I made these war-battalions an object of study. The men in them were very willing, but too fond of accepting stirrup-cups from their "sedentary" comrades in the wine-shops near the muster-ground. When the signal for advance is heard, however, the active National Guard at once wipes his mouth with the sleeve of his watchcoat, kisses his friend on the cheek, and rushes to join the ranks; the drums burst into a rousing roll, and the colonel from his horse waves his sword to his captains, who break into a simultaneous cry of "*Mar-r-che!*" Let us stand on the side-path, and take note of the regiment as it passes, premising that the

various regiments are differently uniformed (if the word "uniform" can be used in this connection), and that in several instances the battalions of the same regiment are differently uniformed. Some wear capotes of almshouse grey, others of black; and some are clad in brown, or different hues of green or blue; but all are warmly covered, and have hoods to protect their ears from the night air. Here comes a specially well-found cohort. At its head, some thirty yards in advance, is the picket that serves as vanguard. Next in order, hatchets on shoulders, and tools strapped to their knapsacks, march the pioneers, who have dispensed with their beards of wondrous length and their white leather aprons. At a little distance behind the pioneers, strides, staff in hand, the drum-major, his towering bearskin conspicuous by its absence. It is replaced by a workmanlike *képi*; all the gilding in scarf and fringe, tassels of bullion and other schoolboy vanities that might serve as target for the enemy, have been similarly dispensed with. The drum corps, composed of army-pensioners, follows with the fanfare of buglers in its wake. There is this difference

between them and those of a British regiment—there are no boys in their ranks. But neither drums deafen us with their ruffling nor bugles pierce our tympanum with their shrilly notes; for this corps is happy in the possession of a brass band, which makes it a point to accompany it to the fortifications. The musicians are blowing away with might and main at the inspiring strains of a national pot-pourri composed, as well as one can distinguish, of the "*Chant du Départ*" and the "*Bataillon de Quatre-vingt-treize*," with a few bars from the "*Marseillaise*" thrown in by way of make-weight. Patriotically they puff their cheeks; but the music is—well, we shall not be censorious, but give them credit for the best intentions. Immediately behind the band trip along, with that mincing gait distinctive of the female animal disguised in small clothes, the cantinières. The bystanders carry their fingers to their lips and give them an approving smack as they pass, but they thrill with delight as they notice the tiny Roman dagger which hangs at some she-warrior's side. Some of these doughty damsels go in for sterner weapons. I have seen the ivory heads

of revolvers, such as Mdlle. Aymée fired off in Offenbach's "*Carabiniers*," peeping over a glazed belt, and gazed with fear (for her personal safety) on one hard-browed Megæra with a genuine chassepot carried at the advance. There is a swarthy female of a certain age, lines of care congealed on her yellow forehead, who is wonderful in a Quartermaster's cocked hat and a semicircular Turkish sword. But she has the right to sport them, for she is the Mère Crimée, is decorated with the medals of Sebastopol and Italy, and they tell us is as kind in the kernel as she is rough in the rind. A long space behind the cantinières is reserved for the friends of the regiment, who see it out to the city gates as an escort of honour. Then ride the colonel and his orderly-officer, flanked by a squad of picked men; and behind them a useful and ominous staff of officers, the "coffin-maker's mess," the surgeons—none of them a whit like jolly Maurice Quill, cheerful at the prospect of occupation. Watch! Here are the rank and file marching along with broad front in open column of sections, their captains leading a few paces in advance of the

centre files. Steadily enough they press on with passable dressing and a well-preserved cadence step, and soldierly they begin to look. There is a wife walking by her husband's side, and bearing his rifle; a little daughter trots by the father, who is going out to possible slaughter; here a boy is happy and pleased to help his big brother with the knapsack, and no trifle it is, with its bordering of tent-pegs and cannikins, its round cake prudently lashed on the back and its roll of blankets, canvas and canteens in a pile on the top. The younger men, some mere boys, sing and get up a factitious joy, and the covering-sergeants wave their embroidered *guidons*; but there are wet eyes of women around, and a current of melancholy under this surface of exhilaration, for the home, be it ever so poor, has been left behind. Still, on they march with a rollicking mien; and now lumber into view the convoy of ambulances with their grim suggestiveness, and the baggage-waggons, beside which many men limp sooner than quit their comrades at the hour of danger.

After the review, I passed on to the Place Vendôme,



where two new battalions of Foot-Chasseurs were drawn up. Brisk little fellows, what a weight they can carry! They stepped out smartly to the sprightly fanfare of their bugles. As they started off at that amazing quickstep of theirs—too quick, I hold, to be advisable over long distances—a heavy shower fell; but they sang and shouted and laughed as the jester of one of the leading companies stuck an umbrella, with as many holes in it as a sieve, over his knapsack, and another boyishly jangled a town-crier's bell he had got hold of—it would be ungenerous to inquire how or where. The French officers winked at these pranks. The martinet will be horrified, but the French officers were right. The temperament of their men is not English, and the “merry heart goes all the day, your sad tires in a mile-a.” A wiry, weazened, elderly non-commissioned officer, with a breast of medals and a patch of sticking-plaster on his cheek, swore his thousand thunders and other mighty oaths at them for ne'er-do-weels; but the more he wrathfully raged the more they joyfully rioted.

A decree appeared about this date summoning

all persons with stores of potatoes in their possession to declare what quantities they had over and above the requirements of their families, and to be prepared to hold them at the disposal of the Government under pain of their confiscation. Also there came notifications that the gas would be shut off on the 30th inst., and that balloons could no longer venture to ascend except under screen of the night.

The 23rd was wet and depressing. Never was there more suiting season for a pilgrimage foremost to a graveyard. And the pilgrimages there were so frequent that they ceased to excite remark, save when some notable additions were made to our rich necrology. Two of these were announced. The Bozacchi—a pouting, pretty, sylph-like creature, a rosebud of eighteen, the promise and pet of the operatic world, who had made a brilliant first appearance but six months before in “Coppélia”—felt indisposed on Sunday, the 20th, and took to her bed. Yesterday, at her door, there was a melancholy guard of honour from the undertaker’s, the pair of traditional standard-bearers of mourning, the Gog and Magog of the black Guildhall. She

had capitulated in a few hours from an attack of virulent smallpox ; and she was the bread-winner of her family—left five brothers and sisters behind to

“grieve for her the doubly dead,  
In that she died so young.”

In France there is an insidious disease, *fluxion de poitrine*, cousin-germane to inflammation of the lungs, and that, with the terrible smallpox, was the reigning malady. Its last victim was a former Phil-Hellenist, M. Piscatory, who caught it one of those bitter nights on the ramparts. He was seventy-one years of age, and went off the tree of life at a breath, like a ripe fruit hanging by a worn stem. Piscatory fought for a free Greece under Marco Bozzaris, was a peer of France in 1846, and Ambassador to Spain towards the close of the reign of Louis-Philippe.

While grand old heroes like this, with snow on their heads and the lava-fire of patriotism in their bosoms, were ready with such example, what was to be thought of the snivelling hounds who cowered in their rooms, with their shins to the fire, in the hope of evading the law which included them in

he mobilized National Guard ? In one street alone, the Rue de Vert-bois, no fewer than eighty-four of these sneaks were dug out who had never mounted a guard or even attended a drill. And soldiers and gentlemen affronted danger to preserve the cravens in the enjoyment of a whole skin. What an ecstasy of malice there was in seeing an awkward squad of those malingerers going through their facings !

Some of the Freeshooters were not over-scrupulous in the acquisition of booty ; but as an illustration of honesty, the act of a party of the 2nd company of Parisian Carbineers deserves to be chronicled. They had discovered 3,200 francs in gold in the cellar of a deserted house, at Courbevoie, and gave it up to their commandant.

On the 24th the Governor issued, too tardily, a warning to the newspapers not to publish information of the movements of troops, or the measures taken for defence, under pain of prosecution before the military tribunals. There was a pigeon-message from Gambetta at Tours, dated the 16th, reporting perfect order in the interior, 200,000 men in line on

the Loire, and the formation of an army of 100,000 to take the field on the 1st of December, with an extra force of 200,000 in second line. Europe was sympathetic, and astonished at recent successes; everybody believed the diplomatic situation had improved for France, and, with rare exceptions, there was no talk of elections or armistice. France, then, was satisfied with the fragment of a government at Tours, of which the advocate with the *ore rotundo* was speaking-trumpet. *Credat Judæus Apella*. This pigeon must have lingered by the chimney-pots on the journey, for another, which started on the 23rd, from Orleans, flew in on the same day with eleven hundred messages for private individuals. But *the* news was the début of the war-battalions of the National Guard represented by the 72nd (Commandant de Brancion), recruited round Paris and Auteuil, and composed principally of Benedicks. At two o'clock it was sent off with the 4th battalion of the Eclaireurs of the Seine to occupy the village of Bondy, outside the forts to the north-east. The movement was under command of M. Massiou, a naval officer. The 72nd behaved in a way worthy

of "the Macraes"—the regiment of the like number in another service—carried a barricade, and, skirmishing from tree to tree, forced the enemy back by the road to Metz and the Canal de l'Ourcq. Four were wounded, first among them M. Massiou, who demeaned himself like a sailor. The Eclaireurs, who held the trenches from Bondy to a cemetery on the right, had no losses. Deduction: they were not seriously engaged. Some shells were pitched from the Fort of Noisy, and must have wrought havoc, as an ambulance flag was hoisted on a house at the edge of the forest. This forest, by the way, is the celebrated one where the dog of Montargis witnessed the murder of his master, Aubry de Montdidier, by the Chevalier Macaire. The knowing quadruped returned to Paris, bided his time, denounced the assassin, and vanquished him in ordeal of combat before Charles V. and his court. A pretty story, and almost as truthful as the legend of William Tell. But a souvenir less remote and more authentic attaches to the place. There the capitulation of Paris was signed in 1814.

At four o'clock the 72nd retired from Bondy,

the whole movement thus resolving itself into a reduced imitation of that immortalized by Tarlton :

“The King of France, with forty thousand men,  
Went up a hill, and so came down agen.”

This position had been already in possession of the French and was evacuated. Why it should have been retaken and evacuated a second time, except for the sake of “bleeding” the National Guards, was a mystification. It seems to be beyond question that they did behave well, but the Prussians were too strong to permit them to remain there in safety.

Two balloons left on this day, notwithstanding the notice that they could only fly by night, one governmental and the other private. The latter, captained by Wilfrid de Fonvielle, carried five passengers.

A series of publications, brought out by a Committee of Indelicacies, were amusing the lovers of gossip for weeks. These, the “Secret Documents of the Second Empire,” have been passed by in this record with contempt, for the reason that they were puerile, indiscreet, and unseasonable; but the in-

stalment which appeared on the 25th November had contents of some real historical value, which it will be profitable to make known. A list of telegrams from the generals of the Army of the Rhine (so called) to the War Ministry were given, from which it transpired that on the 20th of July there was neither sugar, salt, coffee, brandy, nor rice at Metz, the chief war depôt of France; that on the 24th the corps at Thionville had no ambulances, and that not a single staff-map of the frontier could be found at St. Avold. On the 4th of August Marshal Canrobert wrote from the camp at Chalons that there was but *one* veterinary surgeon to the twenty batteries of the 6th corps; and so late as the 7th the Place of Verdun was without the complement of wine, brandy, sugar, coffee, bacon, and fresh meat required for its siege stock. On the 10th of August a major-general at Metz wrote :—" We have no official detail of the affairs of the 6th yet." Those affairs (Forbach and Woerth) passed within a day's ride. General Michel arrived at Belfort to take command of a brigade, and wired to Paris, " Where are my regiments?" The Admiral of the Fleet at



Brest complained that he was going on his cruise without charts of the Baltic and the North Sea. An artillery general at Douai reported that there was a fine store of horse-collars there, one-third of which were too narrow to go on any animal's neck. The plague of Red Tape was on the Administration. What streams of Red Blood had been wasted in the vain endeavour to wipe out its accursed stains ! If the Committee had confined itself to these disclosures, it would have done wholesome work, and none could reasonably object to it ; but, instead, it applied itself with underbred zeal to the dirty job of raking up forgotten scandals. For it the seal of domestic privacy had no sacredness. These most unchivalric of Paul Pry inquisitors printed the playful message of a fond mother to her son, and the affectionate letter of a son to his mother, in the hope of covering their authors with ridicule.

A tedious jeremiad appeared in the *Official Journal* to-day anent the arbitrary Prussians who had arrested M. de Raynal at Versailles, and sent him to Germany to be tried by court-martial on a charge of keeping up "a correspondence with the

enemy." There was a protest, too, against Count Bismarck, who had threatened to mete out the same measure to the balloon crews which had come under his omnipotent thumb. The organ of the Provisional Government positively cited in support of its views a leading article from the issue, of the 10th inst., of that *Standard* it had so recently denounced as "notoriously hostile to France"! The awful Chancellor was no fool; he durst not carry out his threats; he was but discharging empty thunderbolts. If there was intention to shoot M. de Raynal, there were firing-parties at Versailles. As to the aéronauts, the petulant jabber about them should have been consolatory; it proved they were an annoyance to those who wished ill to France.

The last ration of salt meat for a time was distributed this day, the 25th November; horse was to be served out for a fortnight, when it was to be pleasantly varied by a new allotment of badly corned beef. As for the juicy and tender sirloins, the Maintenon cutlets, the delicate Châteaubriands, the plump roast lamb, the succulent legs of mutton—they had gone into the *ewigkeit*. On the 26th of

November there were indications that the hour for action was about to strike. A notice was posted that from the following morning the barriers were to be closed to all except soldiers and those escorting soldiers' tools or impedimenta, provision and ambulance waggons, and workmen actually engaged in the operations of defence. Of course, this restriction may have been adopted to save marauders, to bar the way to amateur military critics, or to block the channel by which Count Bismarck got information of what was passing. That the order was warranted, an incident will prove. A robust young girl, wounded on the plain of St. Denis, was brought into the Dubois Hospital. Amputation was deemed unavoidable.

"My child," said the surgeon, "you see what the hankering after a few francs has brought upon you."

"A few francs!" cried the patient. "I'd freely part with another limb on the same terms!"

Pressed to explain, the girl admitted that she had been in the habit of taking copies of the *Siècle* and the *France* to the German outposts, for

which she got three bright napoleons each journey. But there was other evidence that something stirring was at hand. Certain Swiss who had applied for passes were told by Jules Favre that no foreigners could leave for the moment. Besides, there were movements of troops towards the north and south; long lines of Mobiles, with fourgons, were proceeding outside the ramparts; the new artillery had been delivered from the foundries; and the marching companies of the National Guard were ready to enter into line. The great sortie could not be kept back long; but whither was it to be essayed? and if successful, could an erupting army stand on its own bottom? Amongst the far-seeing all faith in relief from outside had been lost. The provinces had the wrong guides in MM. Gambetta, Crémieux' and Glais-Bizoin, a flatulent agitator and a pair of crotchety dotards. Men to *organize* victory, not to "decree" it, were the men demanded.

With all the self-denial that Paris exhibited under its trials—trials that might well have bowed down the spirit of a less proud city—it must be confessed that there were many within its walls

who were thriving on the misfortunes of their neighbours. In periods of public calamity there is invariably a class that profits by the general ruin. When typhus is prevalent, coffin-makers are content; the veterinary surgeons had a good time of it during the rinderpest; the smart men who furnished the army with paper-soled shoes were happy while the American Civil War lasted; and there were speculators who drew gold-fish into their nets by this siege. The equanimity with which the pigeon-fanciers, hippophagists, and aëronauts reconciled themselves to the surrounding sorrows could be understood. One could even condone that ingenious rascal with a bandaged head who paraded a pair of human ears in a jar of spirits of wine on the boulevards, and brought down a flush of coppers by making believe they were his own, sliced off by the barbarous Prussians, until a wide-awake bystander tore off his soiled swathings and exposed the fraud. But the rapacity of the dealers in comestibles, who held back their viands until prices rose to an exorbitant rate, and then put them in their windows, was unpardonable. It was in-

controvertible that there was as much gold in Paris now as on the 19th of September; but it had changed owners. Most of it had gone into the tills of the provision-merchants. There was no commerce except over the counter; the coffee-houses were comparatively empty; the traders in *articles de Paris* were subsisting on their own fat; professional men—save doctors and journalists—and most of the artisans were idle; tailors and drapers were doing less than in ordinary seasons: the wealthy settlers had fled, and many residents, instead of buying coats and uniforms, made coat serve for uniform, and uniform for coat; but those who trafficked in provender were masters of the situation, and made the most of it. All articles of food not regulated by Government tariff were by this up to extraordinary figures. A round of cheese was as precious as a pearl; a goose fetched sixty-five francs, and a rabbit twenty-five. Eighteen-pence the pound English was demanded for confitures, the first cost of which did not exceed a penny, as they were manufactured of paste, coloured and sweetened. Chemistry was called in to the aid of

chicanery. Doctored pumpkins were sold as apricot-marmalade; sugar of carrot, cunningly perfumed with hydrocarbonates, as quince or pineapple jelly. These impostures did not affect the needy; they were satisfied so long as they could obtain bread and corned horse. The Government did what it could to repress abuse and stave off want. Soup-kitchens were established in the twenty arrondissements. In one alone—and that not the worst off—the ninth, *thirteen thousand* tickets for rations were distributed gratis daily. Potatoes were stored in the Central Market; and as there was but one bureau for their allotment there was a tremendous rush there, and many women who had waited for hours had to go away empty-handed before their turn arrived. To have any certainty of a basketful one had to be on the spot by three in the morning. There were but 5,937 cows in the place now, and of these 1,720 had been seized and paid for at the fixed price of butchers' meat, their owners not having fodder for them, or having made appraisal of them too late. In 350 cases the owners had tried to conceal that they had cows.

Some of the war-battalions of the National Guard having taken their colours to the outposts, contrary to usage, General Clément Thomas gave orders that these glorious emblems should be left in charge of their sedentary comrades. The Bellevillites did not like this; they were eager to carry into fight the banner expressly designed for them, and presented as a peace-offering at the tail of a laudatory address by M. Jules Ferry. These doughty revolutionists had Phrygian caps on their *guidons*, and were clad in serviceable grey tunics. They professed themselves anxious to enjoy that "most beautiful and enviable lot" (*vide* André Chenier's song), death for their country. If they should die, the country would not be inconsolable at the loss.

On Sunday, the 27th, the movements of troops on a grand scale continued—this time from east to west, and *vice versâ*; the first distribution of salt cod was made, and this inscrutable populace looked cheerful, for the weather was dry if cold, and there was animation abroad. The old Gaulish gaiety was not utterly extinct. I bought a little sheet, the *Trac* (the "Funk"), which informed its readers



that it would be served to them in the cellars in the event of bombardment. The only jarring note was sounded in the *Official* by M. Jules Ferry, who reprimanded sundry jobmasters and cabmen for having fed their horses on bread. On this day also, passes beyond the fortifications were suspended, permission to correspondents to accompany the staff was rigorously refused, and the newspapers were prohibited under pain of stoppage to publish any except the official accounts of the operations outside. The crisis had come; and these measures were imperative to safeguard the secret of the real point of attack on the besiegers, and to preserve the population of the city from dangerous alarms or exaggerations of success quite as dangerous.

## CHAPTER XIII.

The Hour of Action—Preparatory Operations—Trochu's Design—Ducrot's Address—The Seizure of Avron—The Feint at Gennevilliers—On the Heights of Montmartre—A Gale of Gunpowder—A False Alarm—General Thomas Speechifies—A Pair of Captives—More Proclamations—In the Throes of Suspense—Exaggerations—Arrival of Wounded—Counting Chickens before they are Hatched—The Official Bulletins—Sum of the First Day's Operations—Military Criticisms.

THE hour to which Paris looked forward with such impatience had, indeed, struck. The Great Sortie was attempted. How tremendous a struggle it was will best be appreciated if one recollects that on the French side more men by thousands were engaged than the strength of the combined forces that fought out Waterloo. Add to this, that one army was supported by permanent fortifications, cannon-carrying and armour-clad railway waggons, and floating

batteries; the other by formidable entrenchments on a rising ground; and that both were strong in artillery and rifles of the newest pattern, and were fed with reinforcements by rail. While one of the most terrible battles of modern times was raging; while the destinies of two races were at stake under the walls of Paris, the city was orderly, calm, full of courage and of hope. One might traverse whole quarters of it for hours and never dream that the fierce game of war was being played so near. The omnibuses plied, shops were open, children gambolled in the squares—indeed, were it not for the continuous roll of ordnance like distant thunder, the groupings in subdued conversation on the boulevards, and here and there the passage of a waggon with the red cross, there were none but peaceful indications, and Paris was as quiet and self-contained as some drowsy provincial town.

A council of war, it transpired, had been held on Saturday, the 26th, at which General Trochu informed the commanders of army-corps and other superior officers that his one idea since the investment had been, after having solidly provided for

the defence, to assume the offensive.\* He had done all that was humanly in his power to secure the place against capture by storm, or even by regular siege; now it could only surrender to famine, and as provisions were diminishing, and the tidings from the army of the Loire were favourable, he thought the time had come for a portion of the garrison to cut its way out, and effect a junction with d'Aurelles de Paladines. To Ducrot and the second army that duty was assigned.

On Sunday and Monday the necessary concentration of troops outside the ramparts was made, under screen of skirmishes of outposts in various directions. Rear Admiral de la Roncière got control of the St. Denis garrison, which was formed into a separate command. Ducrot moved his headquarters to Vincennes, and issued the following electrifying address to his troops:

“Soldiers of the Second Army of Paris,—The

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\* This narrative of the great sortie is based on official accounts, personal observation, and information derived from the wounded and others who took part in the different combats. It is as full and free from prejudice as may be.

moment has come to burst through the ring of iron that binds us round too long, and threatens to choke us in slow agony ! Upon you the honour of attempting this glorious enterprise has devolved. I am satisfied you will show yourselves equal to it.

“No doubt difficulties will meet us at the outset ; we shall have serious obstacles to surmount, but we must look them in the face with calmness and resolution, without making too much of them or giving way to weakness.

“Here is the plain truth. At our very first steps, touching our advanced posts, we shall come upon implacable enemies, flushed with pride and confidence by too many successes. A powerful effort will have to be made there, but it is not beyond your strength ; the ground has been prepared for action. Thanks to the foresight of our commander-in-chief, four hundred pieces of cannon, two-thirds of them of the heaviest calibre, have been got ready ; no material impediment can possibly stand before them ; and there will be more than one hundred and fifty thousand of you to rush forward by the

opening they will make, all well armed and equipped, supplied with plenty of provisions, and all, I firmly trust, burning with an irresistible ardour.

“If we vanquish in the outset of the struggle our success is certain, for the enemy has sent the bulk of his best troops towards the Loire, and the heroic and fortunate efforts of our brothers keep them there.

“Courage, then, and confidence! Remember that in this supreme trial we fight for honour and liberty, for the safety of our beloved and unhappy fatherland; and if this is not motive enough to set your hearts on fire, think on your devastated fields, on your ruined families, on your weeping sisters, wives, and mothers!

“May the thought fill you with the same thirst for vengeance, the same deep rage, that animates me, and inspire you with a contempt for danger.

“Personally, my mind is made up. I swear before you and the entire nation that I will not re-enter Paris except dead or victorious! You may see me fall, but you will never see me retreat. Should I fall, do not hesitate, but avenge me!

“Forward, then, forward ! and God be our protector !”

An effective force, comprising eighteen battalions of the Garde Mobile, was marched on Courbevoie in readiness to meet any attack from the side of Versailles or Saint Germain, while the real advance was being made at the opposite point of the compass. It was well known in the city late on Monday that the long-desired active movements were to be inaugurated on the following morning ; the cannonade from the forts had been furious and incessant the previous night ; a long train of steel-bright new guns had passed towards the east in the forenoon ; the vessels of the Seine flotilla had quietly steamed out to their positions up and down stream ; a requisition on the river steamers for the conveyance of troops and wounded had been issued ; the staff of the ambulances were told to prepare their dressings and stretchers, and orders were given to keep the furnaces alight in the locomotives on the Orleans Railway, which had been mounted with guns shielded with iron mantlets on the American system.

On Monday evening, while the city was yet in the throes of expectation, the preliminary operations had begun. Towards the east the plateau of Avron was quietly taken possession of by Admiral Saisset's sailors, supported by d'Hugues' division, and a numerous long-range artillery was installed there so as to threaten the roads followed by the German convoys at Gagny, Chelles, and Gournay. Towards the west, in the peninsula of Gennevilliers, where the Seine first doubles on itself to the left of St. Denis, the French were equally busy. At six fire was opened across the river from several batteries of mortars and rifled guns, and a rocket train, which had been brought up close to Argenteuil and Bezons. The enemy appears to have been taken aback by this sudden attack after dark. The French gunners succeeded in causing sundry conflagrations in his midst, some of which flamed up with fierce intensity and continued to burn long into the night. Under shelter of the artillery the troops occupied the isle of Marante, and the Port-aux-Anglais (not to be confounded with the Port à l'Anglais, between the forts of Ivry and Charenton), where they strongly



entrenched themselves. This feint, which was meant to give the enemy occupation, must have deceived him as to the intentions of the garrison, as it had been preceded by a reconnaissance in the earlier part of the day on Buzenval and the hills of Boispréau, more to the south, almost in a right line between Mont Valérien and the Seine. With an instinct of what was coming, I had ensconced myself in a lodging with a balcony that served as observatory on the Butte Montmartre, not far from the site of the marine battery, beside the windmill familiar to the Sunday pleasure-seekers of Paris as the Moulin de la Galette. The view of the entire country round from this perch was capital, and had already been taken advantage of by the Government, which had established a signal-post on the crown of the height, directed by a party of naval officers, and a sort of look-out box in charge of the artillery. I got into my nest with a good glass at about eleven p.m. I had not long to wait. Almost on the stroke of midnight there was a boom to the south, repeated, quick as echo, from the right and left. The cannonade had commenced from the forts of Issy,

Vanves, and Montrouge, and shooting tongues of flame could be marked in the distance, a vivid red in the moonlight. The reports came back with painful clearness, in the stillness of the night, over the immense human hive that lay silent underneath. In about a quarter of an hour Bicêtre, more to the left as one looked towards the line of fire on the horizon, joined in the sinister concert; and there were flashes, followed by reverberations, as lightning is by thunder, from three several spots beyond. Those were the batteries in the redoubts of the Moulin Saquet, Villejuif, and the Hautes-Bruyères, that were stirring into life. At one o'clock Ivry and Charenton swelled the roar, and detonations like quarry-blasts seemed to rise from the river-bed, probably from the floating-batteries and gunboats, which had dropped down to the confluence of the Seine and the Marne. A rattle of ordnance could be heard from the guns of the western attack, but on the rest of the cordon of forts the cannon were mute. At two o'clock there was a lull, but coming on to three the gale of gunpowder bellowed anew, while bugle-notes and the bicker of drums rose,

distinct by contrast of sound, from the streets of the city. It was impossible to think of sleep, even if one were ever so willing, in the midst of this infernal din, which persisted for six mortal hours longer, while the chill breath of the dawn made itself felt as the sky in the east was streaked with an undecided orange, and the grey morning mist cleared away.

Between five and six o'clock, when the enemy appeared to reply, as many as four shots could be counted in a second ; but towards eight the energy relaxed, the firing from the forts ceased, and the field-artillery—for such there must certainly have been engaged—moved out of hearing. At eight, when I descended from the Butte, an occasional rumble, this time from Aubervilliers and the Nord, was all that could be caught by the ear. I turned in for a wash and a cup of coffee, and, about eleven, hurried to the Place Vendôme to inquire was there any message from without, and what was the meaning of the unusual bugle-blasts and drum-beating which had been heard during the night. A large body of the National Guard were under arms

in front of their staff-quarters on the square. They had been roused from their beds in consequence of an alarm that the turbulent classes of Belleville meditated a rising. The *rappel* had been beaten in that quarter at an unwonted hour; but it turned out, on inquiry, that this was done, not as a revolutionary summons, but in obedience to the order of the commandant of the *secteur* of defence, who had failed to give previous advice to headquarters. General Thomas had passed in review the battalions of the National Guard which had gathered to the muster, and had read them the address of Ducrot to his army, which provoked a wild enthusiasm.

"If our brave brothers succumb," said General Thomas, "on us be the duty to avenge them!" and the answer was a cheer of assent from the citizen-soldiers.

After this demonstration the greater part of them were marched home; those battalions that still remained and paced quickly to and fro by their piled arms to warm themselves, were kept for possible emergencies. None of them knew a word of what

was going on beyond the ramparts. At the other side of the tall Napoleon column, cast from the metal of the German trophies of 1805, there was a knot of idlers round an open one-horse waggon in front of the headquarters of the Military Division. Two prisoners had been brought in, and the crowd was waiting to see what they looked like. The driver of the waggon told me there had been infantry-fighting towards Choisy, and as soon as I had satisfied my curiosity, like the rest, by a glance at the prisoners, a pair of well-conditioned, well-whiskered fellows in rifle-green uniform and flat caps with red bands—happy enough they looked at their respite from glory—I moved off to the Palais Royal to take the omnibus towards the Avenue d'Italie. On the way I noticed Ducrot's proclamation posted up beside one from the Government (to which General Trochu's name was not signed), appealing to the people to be firm in the crucial hour, to repress all agitations, and to support the troops by steadiness and union. Trochu's name was not at the bottom of this document, for the good reason that he had left the night previous to

superintend operations in person. The Governor of Paris had been merged in the military man, but even the General could not get over his mania for proclamation-writing. Here is his manifesto, which was posted beside the others, and was the shortest yet seen from his pen :

“Citizens of Paris, Soldiers of the National Guard and of the Army,—The policy of invasion and conquest means to complete its work. It introduces in France, and pretends to establish in Europe, the right of brute force. Europe may submit to this outrage in silence, but France is resolved to combat it, and our brothers summon us forth to the supreme struggle.

“After so much blood has been shed, blood is about to be spilled again. Let the responsibility of it fall upon those whose hateful ambition tramples under foot the laws of modern civilization and justice. Let us put our confidence in God, and march forward for Fatherland.”

When I got to the Avenue, it was black with anxious groups, journalists and painters — Weiss

and Gustave Doré among others—beside judges and grocers, all drawn there from the same motives as myself, and excited gossip passed from mouth to mouth; but from the exaggerations that were current, it was evident nothing definite was known.

“We have taken nine thousand prisoners,” said one.

“The Prussians had to spike eighty of their own guns they were obliged to abandon,” chimed in another. “A soldier told it me.”

These soldiers, poor pale fellows, began to be carried in, with crimson-streaked bandages on heads, legs, and arms, but they knew less than we. They had been ordered to advance, had advanced, and had suddenly felt a stunning sensation, and saw blood trickling down on their sleeves or trousers. Most of them were slightly wounded, and bore themselves bravely. I saw three boys pass smiling, all of whom, singularly enough, had been hit in the right wrists; but others had been more severely injured, and it was painful to witness the contortions of their features as they were jolted over the pavements. There was a long line of

ambulance-waggon in the streets; vehicles of every description, from furniture-vans and railway-omnibuses to tilted carts, had been pressed into the service. The wounded were carried in the first instance to a hospital at 143 in the Avenue d'Italie, and subsequently transported to the interior of the town. The 55th active battalion of the National Guard pass with drums and bugles, but they can give no tidings. They had been camped on the plain of Vitry, from which they had heard the cannonade and fusillade to the front, but had not fired a shot. At five o'clock, the 169th and 249th battalions of the National Guard re-entered; they had not been required to go into action, which was accepted as an auspicious sign. But the anxiety to know the truth was immense, and there was a general reflux towards the Hôtel-de-Ville, the Ministries, Mairies, and newspaper-offices, and wherever information was likely to be had. The belief was general that Choisy-le-Roi had been taken, owing to a printed card, sent out from a pseudo-telegraph agency at 47, Rue Condorcet, announcing that the position had been carried before



eleven, and that a regiment of Uhlans had been captured. With the buoyancy of the French character, triumphant vistas already opened up. I heard one sanguine old man say he did not think they should go to Berlin; for his part, he would be satisfied with the taking of Mayence! By-and-by the truth began to leak out, but it would not be believed. The *Patrie* hinted that the great operation had to be stopped by the break of a bridge of boats over the Marne (as if any great operation were ever trusted to *one* bridge); the *Liberté* went farther, and circumstantially stated that the sortie had failed, and would have to be postponed. This was so; but the *Liberté* took too sombre a view of it, and it was hardly astonishing that some ardent patriots burned the *Liberté* on the streets, and spoke of going to the office to smash the presses. At about nine o'clock an official report, full of delicate fibbery, was placarded to reassure the public. This stated that General Vinoy, supported by a powerful artillery, had made a movement against l'Hay and the cattle-station of Choisy. The National and Mobile Guard had been engaged,

as well as the troops, and the affair had been lively. "The object the Governor had in view had been attained." A despatch, dated two o'clock p.m., added that he solidly occupied the position he had proposed, and that the operation followed its course. This was false, but it was necessary. The unvarnished truth was that the movement had been compromised by causes which Trochu had not anticipated.

In order to cover the passage of the Marne, attacks were ordered to be made on two points dominating Choisy, so as to retain the enemy's reserves at Rungis, Fresnes, and Villeneuve-Saint-Georges. Both were to be directed by General Vinoy, commander of the Third Army; and to Rear-Admiral Pothuau, in command of the Seventh Division, was confided the execution of that on the Gare-aux-Bœufs beyond Vitry, while the second, on the village of l'Hay, in advance of Villejuif, was assigned to a portion of General de Maud'huy's Division. Before daybreak the Admiral set his troops in motion—two battalions of Marines and the 106th and 116th war-battalions of the National

Guard. The Marines went forward as if on a boarding-party; they had with them boarding-hatchets, daggers, and pistols for close quarters, as well as their rifles, which few soldiers know how to use better, for all of them are trained marksmen. This attack was a perfect success. The Prussians were surprised, and fell back, leaving some prisoners behind, amongst them an officer. The position was held by the French from seven to ten, and they were proceeding to throw up breastworks, when the order arrived to effect a retrograde movement. Colonel Valentin, with de Maud'huy's First Brigade, consisting of the 109th and 110th of the Line and two battalions of Breton Mobiles, led the attack on l'Hay almost simultaneously. The troops went forward pluckily, and met slight resistance at first; the centre and right penetrated into the village after some hand-to-hand fighting at a barricade; but on the left the Prussians made a desperate defence. The 110th, which was in the first line here, with the 4th battalion of Finisterre in support, suffered considerably. The Lieutenant-Colonel of the 110th was badly wounded, a battalion leader

was shot dead, and the commandant of the Mobiles of Finisterre was struck down while cheering on his men. Still there was every chance of the ground being carried when the order to retire arrived, and the French had to fall back while the Prussian reserves from Chevilly came on to what they expected would be an easy pursuit. But their impetuosity was soon checked ; a murderous cannonade was opened from the redoubt of Hautes-Bruyères and some field-artillery near, and succeeded in inflicting heavy losses on the columns that were pushing on to l'Hay. At the same moment a hundred throats of bronze and steel brailed from the gun-boats on the Seine below Port à l'Anglais, from the heavy pieces on the cuirassed trains on the Orleans Railway, from the batteries round Vitry, from the Moulin-Saquet, and from the fort of Charenton. Within the space covered by those concentrated discharges, it was as if there was a rain of metallic sleet ; the retreat was secure, and the enemy must have had a long list of casualties. The French lost five hundred. The villages of Arceuil and Cachan were blocked up with stretchers

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at one period of the day. In spite of these dearly-bought successes, which would probably have led to the taking of Choisy if prosecuted, the Great Sortie had to be deferred for one of the most vexatious causes in the world. The fastenings of the bridge of boats which had been thrown over the Marne, near Joinville-le-Pont, could not stand against the force of the current of the river, which had suddenly risen. It was a pity, after so much blood had been sacrificed, and when everything looked in promising trim; the crossing had to be adjourned, but only till the following day. The accident was galling, and threatened to put the entire machinery of action out of gear. The enemy would have notice to prepare his defences, and the enemy was not likely to make light of the warning. The lives of Vinoy's brave soldiers were thrown away for nothing; provisions were less by a day's consumption; the advantage of combined attack on several points was neutralized; the high spirit, springing from early success, was lowered; and all because of a piece of neglect that would be accounted disgraceful in a serjeant of Chatham sappers. We

were bound to have another lamentable illustration, on a grand scale, of the proverb, "For want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost." There was no fatality here—such an excuse of superstition does not hold good in war; it was plainest and most culpable want of foresight. And to render this failure of the pontoons more vexatious, there was the reflection that there had been an excellent bridge over the Marne at Joinville until the Engineers demolished it, in a panic of precautionary measures, in the early days of the investment. That bridge was protected by the guns of the Faisanderie redoubt, and could have been made unassailable by a simple *tête de pont*. At this juncture it would have been worth its weight in gold.

There were experts who had no faith in the attempt to pierce the German lines and effect a junction with a problematical Army of the Loire, because of the obstacles in the way of provisioning the troops. The country between them and their compatriots must be ravaged by this time. Better, they reasoned, to seize on Choisy-le-Roi or Ville-

neuve-Saint-Georges, and establish works there which would molest and perhaps break up the enemy's communications with Versailles. By pivoting from these works and keeping up constant intercourse with Paris, something practical might be achieved, and serious annoyance might be caused to the Germans. A *trouée* towards the east with an unwieldy and unwarlike host was—I am only quoting the opinions of others, and those experienced campaigners—impracticable and well-nigh hopeless. But Trochu had his plan; Trochu was a Breton, and Bretons are obstinate as mules.

It is said Vinoy was in favour of a brusque change of front and a bold effort to make a gap towards Versailles. That, if it could be done, would be the wise tactic, and might be successful—if von Moltke were caught napping. But it would require a decisive general, forces with more discipline and activity than those we had, and a resolute energy which was not present. Besides, there was an impression abroad that von Moltke was as sleepless as a weasel. Whatever Vinoy may have thought, and however he may have chafed, the

Breton showed neither design of abandoning his original intention nor desire to profit by the facilities afforded by his manifold opportunities of working on interior lines.

It was foolish speculating when fight was at hand; the already jeopardized sortie was to be pushed to an extremity, and if it were fortunate—who knows?—we might be able to say, “A single field hath turned the chance of war.” This is premature.; the season does not lend itself to the merry sound of music and dance “through the corn-fields, green and sunny vines;” our punctilious chieftain is not the roystering Henry of Navarre. On the whole, we had better wait to see what to-morrow may bring, and husband our gritty bread.

END OF VOL. I.









